Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-EIGHT • NUMBER TWO • AUGUST 1989

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A Statement of Aims

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Doves & Hawks

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I enjoyed reading of John Updike's feelings about the Vietnam era, and I admire him for having had the courage not to yield to the misguided current of opinion predominant, then and now, in his milieu ["On Not Being a Dove," March]. . . .

It makes me a bit uncomfortable, however, that the clarity of Mr. Updike's vision in 1966—when he favored U.S. intervention—has seemingly become somewhat clouded. . . . At the end of his essay, he speaks of the Vietnam episode as "the whole sorry thing." Does the fact that our intervention did not have a happy outcome mean that it was morally flawed all along? What was immoral in my opinion was rather our failure to pursue the war vigorously enough to bring it to a quick end and thus preserve an independent South Vietnam.

Perhaps some of Mr. Updike's ambiguity stems from his apparent perception that the reason for our being in Vietnam was that we had been challenged, and "credibility must be maintained." That is quite valid. However, there was another perfectly good reason for our intervention, rooted in our obligations as a member of the United Nations. Collective security was supposed to be a basic principle of the UN; an attack on one country is an attack on all. The Security Council was supposed to deal with breaches of the peace, but the UN Charter (Article 51) specifically recognized the right of individual and collective self-defense. We, and some of our SEATO allies, were helping South Vietnam defend itself from external aggression. Not even the Hanoi regime bothers any longer to deny that the great majority of the troops who fought as "indigenous rebels" in South Vietnam were actually from the North. The idea that this was a "civil war," and that Ho Chi Minh had some sacred right to "reunify" by force an "artificially divided nation," was simply fatuous. I still do not understand why the U.S. government failed to use the UN Charter argument to greater effect during the war. . . .

J. EDGAR WILLIAMS
Carrboro, North Carolina

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Being almost of one age with John Updike and almost of one birthplace—close enough for our Lititz High to have played his Shillington High in football during the war years—I was very moved by his essay. I am not sure, however, if I am also almost of one mind with him.

True, he says so very very well what I thought, felt, and experienced back in those years, being at odds with the peaceniks; and the reasons for his departure from the *New Yorker* were very like mine (though his departure as a writer was of course a good deal more significant than mine as a subscriber). But what he does not say is whether or not he eventually changed his voting habits. He recounts in great detail what he did during many election years, telling us, for example, that he voted for McGovern in 1972 and even telling us where he cast his vote (in Moscow, *in absentia*). But nothing is said about 1980 and 1984. Did he eventually see the light? I would like to know whether he is my political as well as geographical *landsmann*.

Even if Mr. Updike failed to vote for Ronald Reagan, he has my complete admiration for speaking out. Speaking out is not a popular thing to do among members of the Word Class (a term I use . . . because I cannot bring myself to call Dan Rather, or many a professor, for that matter, an intellectual). One loses friends if one speaks out these days. . . .

The academic world thrives on conformity to leftist notions. This is not because it is populated in the main by leftists, but because professors from the Center and the Right of the political spectrum won't speak out, partly out of fear of losing friends. There are many non-leftist university officials (deans, provosts, presidents, and the like) who in private will tell you, or who in their heart of hearts know, that the various infringements on free speech in our universities are wrong, but who either say nothing or join in the nonsense. Otherwise they would not only suffer social snubs, they would be inundated with petitions, phone calls, and various forms of public reproach. . . .

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The general run of professors is a spineless crowd that proved its cowardice during the Children's Revolution of 1968 and has continued ever since to reaffirm its devotion to inaction on behalf of principle. The notion of courage has taken on a new and trivial meaning. When in 1980 I told a colleague I had voted for Reagan, his reaction was, "A lot of people seem to have voted for him. At least you have the courage to say so." I had not known before then that it was a matter of courage to say whom you voted for in this great land of ours, and moreover in the university, that bastion of free speech, that marketplace of ideas, where the free interplay, etc. etc.

So I congratulate John Updike for his courage in speaking out, then and now. On the other hand, my colleagues consider me, I think, mostly a fool, not a man of courage, so perhaps my congratulations are not very flattering.

RICHARD L. LEED
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

John Updike has written a most eloquent work. The root causes of this "'crazy' time," as Mr. Updike aptly dubs it, were complex, but a crucial factor was surely the nature of this war—a war in which, as he puts it, "an empire tried to carry out an ugly border action. . . ." Old imperial powers such as Great Britain could conduct "border actions," but democratic America is especially ill-suited for such enterprises.

"Democracy fights in anger," as George Kennan put it many years ago—not only before Vietnam but before Korea, and obviously with World War II in mind. A corollary to Kennan's insight must surely be that "border actions"—wars waged indecisively for complicated geopolitical and strategic objectives—were bound to prove extremely troublesome.

"What was Vietnam but Korea again?" asks Mr. Updike. Korea was our other, now largely forgotten, "border action." That period was also a "'crazy' time"—it was just "crazy" in a different way. The words "treason" and "traitor" (with reference to Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson) were heard then in the halls of Congress, and across the country, in many communities, the two were publicly vilified and even burned in effigy; demands for the President's impeachment were not infrequent. When Truman left office in January 1953, he had an even lower approval rating in the polls than Richard Nixon had when he resigned in 1974.

In both Korea and Vietnam, the longer the "border action" went on the more virulent became the backlash at home. Protracted "border actions" are incompatible with the democratic temperament, with our impatience with unpleasant things, and with the American penchant for quick fixes.

What is most difficult to understand were the strategies of our policy-makers. With the Korean experience still in recent memory, they essentially did in Vietnam what they had done before—only it was worse the second time around (and not only because South Korea survived while South Vietnam did not). . . . How well our policy-makers understood their Marxist adversaries is still very much an open question, but their understanding of their own people was obviously deficient.

JAMES E. SALYERS
Ashmore, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

John Updike's attempt to give a Christian justification for war cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. It is stretching it more than a bit to include the killing of government-defined enemies among the things that Jesus would have had his followers "render unto Caesar." After all, didn't the same Jesus teach his followers to "love your enemies, pray for your persecutors" (Matthew 5:44), and "offer no resistance to injury" (Matthew 5:39)?

It is also stretching it to use Jesus' driving out of the money-changers from the Temple as an argument for military killing.

The "sword" that Jesus brought was not a weapon of steel but a call for a faith and a way of life that would sharply divide those who accept the call from those who do not. . . .

HARRY CHISHOLM
Toledo, Ohio

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I found the article by John Updike very moving. It reflected my own feelings at the time almost exactly. Mr. Updike describes his refusal to watch films about the war—the shame and rage that he

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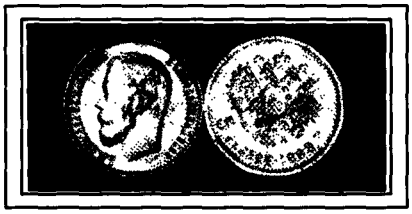

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felt—and I recalled how I, in some of my own barbaric musings, had visualized Jane Fonda being hanged, drawn, and quartered. . . .

And yet in a sense the war was a manifestation of an idea that originated in the 19th century (though in fact it is still with us), the idea of Manifest Destiny. But Manifest Destiny is really just another way of saying vanity. . . .

Then again, there is a lot of luck involved in these adventures. Truman was lucky in Korea. . . . Johnson and Nixon were not lucky.

If our Manifest Destiny is to include the whole world, I think we will need a great deal of luck.

EDWARD H. MALONE
Morehead City, North Carolina

JOHN UPDIKE writes:

The United States' intervention in Vietnam is history, and I tried to recall my conflicted feelings and muddy opinions about it not in order to rehash arguments in a matter where, for better or worse, the decisions have all been made; my purpose was to explore myself, specifically my instincts and prejudices concerning power and pain, in the course of a slowly assembled autobiographical volume called *Self-Consciousness*. The chapter of this book, entitled "On Not Being a Dove," of which COMMENTARY printed a considerable excerpt, follows chapters discussing my skin and my stuttering, and treats my own curious resistance to the peace movement and my hitherto-hidden conservative streak as another pathological topic. Unease is what I felt about presuming to hold any opinion, and unease is what I still feel.

In the light of the actual results of our intervention, I think most Americans could now agree that an ideally wise and prescient administration would have kept us out of Vietnam. Those who suggest, like J. Edgar Williams, that we should have vigorously prosecuted the war to a successful conclusion forget, I think, the real danger of superpower intervention from the other side, as well as the understandable distaste of many South Vietnamese for any government seemingly imposed upon them by a white Western nation. And in the light of today's geopolitics one might even ask if the existence of a Communistic Vietnam with its stagnation and miseries has not done more for the cause of capitalism than would have our strenuous sustaining of another economically competitive, imperfectly democratic Asiatic client state like South Korea.

In answer to Richard L. Leed's question, I voted twice against Ronald Reagan, while admiring his style and some of his policies; his ability to reverse or abandon a course while not surrendering an iota of abstract fervor demonstrated the touch of a true leader. And I did not, of course, abandon the *New Yorker* as a writer—I needed the magazine, and loved it—but only as a very occasional contributor to the editorials of "Notes and Comment." I cannot feel my contributions were missed.

I am grateful to James E. Salyers for recalling the violent unpopularity of the Korean action; among the crucial differences, I would suggest that the nation, a mere five years after triumphing in the global bloodbath of World War II, still had a fighting habit, and that our Communist adversaries, not yet masters of surrogate guerrilla actions, aroused, with their overt aggressions, our democracy's anger enough to last the three years needed to secure the status quo ante on the Korean peninsula.

In answer to Mr. Williams, I thought that the actual results—a Communist regime in Saigon, a waste of destruction and death throughout Vietnam, and a polarized and cynical populace at home—made the thing sorry, rather than a moral flaw in the attempt to keep Vietnam's southern half in the "free-world" camp. But even a noble attempt must be realistically gauged and effectively pursued.

Harry Chisholm does not persuade me that Christianity is a pacifist religion, though it may be a shade less bloodthirsty than Islam. The Hebrew Bible and the history of Christian nations abound in wars heartily waged in God's name, against so-called infidels and heretics. Religions are based, my sense of it is (and hence my quote from the Bhagavad-Gita), in a transcendent revaluation of the brutal and wearisome earthly facts, rather than in a revolutionary faith in the lasting value of replacing one government by another. The prominence of so many Christian clergy in the peace movement I took to signify more a witnessing of the inward "new order" than a reasoned belief that the old order, under which our nation has so remarkably prospered, had passed away.

And of Edward H. Malone I ask, "Why blame Jane Fonda?" She risked her popularity if not her life in what she perceived as a good and necessary cause, and, these two decades later, attacks on her do no honor, I think, to those hundreds of thousands of Americans who served in Vietnam under the terrible cloud of ambiguity, of ill-defined and diminishing purpose. Polk was very lucky, Mr. Malone might have added, in Mexico, in the much-deplored but swiftly achieved conquest that rounded off our national territory. Vietnam may have been the place where our Manifest Destiny ran out of prompt manifestations, but our withdrawal did not end, the years since indicate to me, America's usefulness to the world, as a power player and, more pervasively, as an example of the human energy unleashed by a government that trusts people with most of the decisions that affect their lives.

The Jewish Vote

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb believes that George Bush should have been the preferred candidate among Jews in 1988 ["American Jews: Diehard Conservatives," April]. That is a very respectable position to have taken, and to continue holding today. Thirty percent of the Jewish voters agreed with him. Events may yet prove him right—recent doubts about the administration's policies toward the PLO, Israel, and the Soviet Union notwithstanding. Mr. Himmelfarb has every right to persist in his preference. But he has no right to engage in reckless and insulting characterizations of the 70 percent who disagreed with him ("addled," "learned nothing and forgotten nothing," etc.). His angry disappointment in Jewish voters cannot be buttressed by faulty, selective, incomplete statistical "analysis."

Mr. Himmelfarb's basic argument, reflected in the title itself, is that Jewish voters seem to have political genes that won't let them abandon the Democratic party—even when a Jesse Jackson is such a major factor in it. Space is too limited here to permit a full accounting of huge Jewish votes for non-Democrats over the years—for Robert La Follette, Fiorello La Guardia, Jacob Javits, Clifford Case. Yes, Democratic presidential candidates have had impressive Jewish support for many years—

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from a low of 45 percent (Carter in 1980) to 91 percent (Johnson in 1964). But not automatically or uncritically. The range of 45 to 91 percent itself suggests quite a bit of selectivity and independence.

If Jews have favored the Democratic party over the Republican party so often, it must mean that the candidates and the policies of the respective parties prompted such preference. The CBS exit poll had a very revealing question that Mr. Himmelfarb somehow ignored in his mountain of statistics. Asked "Which factors mattered most in deciding how you voted?"—and permitted to select *two* responses—only 14 percent of the nation's Jewish voters selected "He is my party's candidate." Twice as many selected "The vice-presidential candidates" and "Dukakis's liberal views" as decisive factors. So perhaps there are no partisan genes in Jewish voters after all.

Jesse Jackson was, of course, a major factor in the 1988 contest—in the primaries, at the convention, and in the general election. Mr. Himmelfarb acknowledges, but hardly gives it the importance it deserves, that in the primaries Jewish voters displayed a most responsible and sophisticated judgment. Whatever degree of anti-Semitism or non-anti-anti-Semitism they were prepared to assign to Jackson, the overwhelming majority of Jewish voters correctly found no reason for preferring him to Paul Simon or Albert Gore or Michael Dukakis or Richard Gephardt or Bruce Babbitt. Contrary to the pattern that had surfaced over the years in every contest between a black and a white candidate, Jews gave Jackson *less* support (8 percent) than did whites generally (12 percent). He got such a low Jewish vote both because he had failed sufficiently to allay fears of anti-Semitism or hostility to Israel and because his policies generally were considered unacceptably Left-of-Center.

But how could any Jew support a candidate for President whose party had a Jesse Jackson in it?, Mr. Himmelfarb in effect wants to know. Because most Jews—and non-Jews—believe Jackson has a right to seek support for himself and for his policies. The test for Jews is whether he *prevails*—and he did not prevail. At the convention, Jackson's plans on the Middle East, on a nuclear first-strike, and on tax policy were overwhelmingly rejected. He never got serious consideration for the vice presidency and had absolutely no role in the selection of Lloyd Bentsen. It is irresponsible, recklessly so, for Mr. Himmelfarb to assert—without even a semblance of documentation or analysis—that Dukakis would have been compelled "politically" to give Jackson veto power over key Cabinet appointments, or that "Jackson would be able to block American support for Israel." During the campaign, Bush's Jewish campaign workers did everything they could to scare Jewish voters into thinking that "a vote for Dukakis is a vote for Jackson." But Jewish voters believed Dukakis when he declared clearly and publicly that there was no deal with Jackson for his support.

Mr. Himmelfarb charges Jewish voters with being "addled" after presenting a faulty interpretation of a poll taken by Steven M. Cohen showing that 25 percent of Jews were willing to support a Dukakis ticket even if Jackson were on it. I would think that Mr. Himmelfarb would be delighted to learn that no fewer than 45 percent (of the 70 percent who later actually voted for Dukakis) would have abandoned the Democratic candidate had Jackson been picked. But why is Mr. Himmelfarb shocked? The same poll showed that 44 percent of those polled were *not* convinced that Jackson was an anti-Semite. (Evidently, Mr. Himmelfarb is not sure himself; he keeps referring to Jackson as "an anti-Semite, or at least the loyal friend of the leading anti-Semite.") So what is so significant about the fact that 25 percent of these 44 percent might be willing to stick with Dukakis?

The Jackson issue was important to Jewish voters. But it was not the only issue, much as the Jewish Republicans tried to make it so. To understand why the Dukakis vote was as high as it was, one must remember that perhaps overshadowing the Democrats' Jackson problem was the shocking disclosure of former Nazis and Holocaust-deniers in key spots in the GOP and the Bush campaign. One must also understand the concerns over the influence of Bush's campaign co-chairman, Governor John Sununu, the only governor out of fifty who refused to join in the demand for repeal of the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. One must recall Bush's positions on abortion, gun control, and other social issues on which most Jews had very strong feelings. In recalling these points, I do not mean to reargue the campaign. I cite them, objectively, as elements that contributed to Jewish voters' decisions on election day.

I have a hunch that one of Mr. Himmelfarb's favorite Jewish politicians must be Mayor Ed Koch. During the 1988 primaries, nobody was more anti-Jackson. (He preferred "crazy" to "addled.") Yet on election day Koch voted for Dukakis. Like 70 percent of his fellow Jews—in New York, more than 70 percent—he felt the Jewish interest would not be betrayed by such a vote.

The Jackson factor remains a tough and problematic one, but also very complicated. Jackson cannot be dismissed with any simple or single label. How explain the fact that at the GOP convention, Governor DuPont used his entire ten-minute speech to appeal to Jesse Jackson to move his energies from the Democratic party to the Republican party, that he would find a more welcome home there? How explain that one of the first American leaders to be invited for a long talk with President-elect Bush was Jesse Jackson?

My friend Milton Himmelfarb is disappointed in his fellow Jews, convinced they voted against their best interests in 1988. Perhaps. We shall see. But his article doesn't tell us how, or why.

HYMAN BOOKBINDER
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb correctly observes that there is a divergence between the voting patterns of Jews and those of other white voters. This continuing divergence is a source of embarrassment among Jewish neoconservatives, who like to adopt a "populist" tone (as defenders of the common man's values against a minority of intellectuals), and therefore have trouble facing the fact that within the Jewish community they themselves are an "unpopular" intellectual minority (if one may judge by election returns). Mr. Himmelfarb's solution to the dilemma is to do what he rightly condemns in others—blame the Jews. He sees American Jews as stubbornly persisting in an obsolete allegiance to the Democratic party, and to its liberal wing in particular. He acknowledges that most Jews did not vote for

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Jesse Jackson, yet suggests that they are helping Jackson by voting Democratic. Against these assertions, the following may be said:

1. Just where is the evidence that Jesse Jackson would have exerted influence on Dukakis's Middle East policy? To me, one of the most striking things about the entire 1988 campaign was how little real power Dukakis conceded to Jackson. None of Jackson's platform planks was accepted by the Democratic convention (the one calling for a Palestinian state never even came up for a vote). Dukakis's choice for Vice President was hardly to Jackson's liking, and (whether deliberately or not) Dukakis did not even inform Jackson of the choice. In his acceptance speech, Dukakis devoted far more praise to Jackson's children than to their father! Such concessions as Dukakis made to Jackson were very minor and symbolic in nature—e.g., giving him an evening to address the convention, or giving Jackson's allies greater representation on the far-from-powerful Democratic National Committee. And even as conservative an observer as Fred Barnes has conceded (in the *American Spectator*) that Jackson played a very subordinate role in the autumn campaign. In fact, Louis Farrakhan supported the small New Alliance party because, he said, Dukakis was snubbing Jackson.

2. If stemming the influence of Jesse Jackson is the main task, one can argue that voting Democratic was the best way to do so. (Mr. Himmelfarb argues that it was obvious by election day that Dukakis could not win, but in fact he came very close in major state after major state.) Extremists generally have more influence in parties that are out of power, especially ones that have been out of power for a long time. It could be argued that Dukakis-Bentsen was the last chance for a relatively moderate Democratic administration, and that Jackson's influence will increase in the party precisely because of Dukakis's loss. I do not necessarily agree with this—I think that the chances of a centrist Democrat being nominated in 1992 are better than some people believe—but it is not an unreasonable argument. . . .

3. Maybe Jews were justified in paying more attention to Dukakis's Middle East views than to Jackson's. In fact, Dukakis specifically stated that he would not support the creation of a Palestinian state unless all the parties involved, including Israel, agreed to it. And Dukakis's opponent, after all, had a background in the Texas oil industry, not exactly known as a philo-Semitic or pro-Israel stronghold.

4. Suppose Dukakis had been elected, and then announced that the U.S. was starting a dialogue with the PLO. Suppose he then appointed as his chief of staff an Arab-American who had been the only governor who voted not to condemn the notorious UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. No doubt Mr. Himmelfarb . . . would have seized upon this as "proof" that Jackson dominated the Democrats, and that Jews were foolish not to vote Republican. One hopes (but doubts) that Jewish neoconservatives will now question their assumption that a conservative administration is more likely to be pro-Israel than a liberal one.

Leaving aside specifically "Jewish" issues, does it never occur to Mr. Himmelfarb that perhaps sometimes the majority of Jews are right and the majority of Gentiles wrong? In view of such problems as the budget and trade deficits, the environment, and the persistence of poverty in a time of economic expansion, maybe it is the decision of the majority of Gentiles to vote for Bush that needs explaining, not that of the majority of Jews to support Dukakis.

Despite my criticisms of Mr. Himmelfarb, I do wish to congratulate him for at least admitting the persistence of liberal leanings among the Jews. . . .

STEVEN D. RENNET
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Since the Civil War, the Republican party has functioned as a coalition of insiders and the Democratic party as a coalition of outsiders. The fundamental difference between the two parties is that the Democrats have always been more receptive to outsiders—be they America's dispossessed or newly-arrived immigrants. For most voters, the specific issues at any given time are less important than this underlying difference.

Most Republicans I know are unhappy, not only about blacks and Hispanics, but even about the current wave of Asian immigrants. . . . Their ideal America would be an exclusionary country club. Although they are now willing to welcome Jews to that country club, most Jews regard an invitation based on these concepts with more than a few misgivings.

COMMENTARY would seem to believe that the antagonistic attitude of black political leaders is so serious a matter that Jews should join the country club to protect themselves from the barbarians at the gate. I am not sure that the rest of us see black anti-Semitism as quite so serious a problem.

Most blacks do not hate Jews; what they hate is whites. They will continue to hate whites for another century at least—in the same way that the ethnic nationalities of the Soviet Union will continue to hate the Great Russians, and just about everyone who has been subject to the Turkish empire hates the Turks. Thus are the sins of the fathers visited upon the children. Because they hate whites, black intellectuals are prone to regard themselves as a Third-World people, which encourages them to support the Arab cause. . . .

I would very much prefer to see more blacks take the same stand against black racists that they want us to take against white racists. But I do not view a policy of exclusion as the best way to solve the problem.

WILLIAM A. BAKER
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb makes Jesse Jackson the single issue on which Jews should vote in a presidential election. I think I am representative of many Jews who cannot bring themselves to vote Republican for a variety of reasons, but who also feel that black anti-Semitism is not going to change no matter what happens in presidential elections. . . .

L. SELIGSBERGER
Newton, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Himmelfarb writes that "During the primaries every candidate for the Democratic nomination had attacked every other candidate—except Jackson." But this was merely because all the candidates felt there was no point in attacking a man who posed no real threat and whose supporters might be offended and stay home in November. Similarly, none of the candidates of the party preferred by . . . Mr. Himmelfarb said any-

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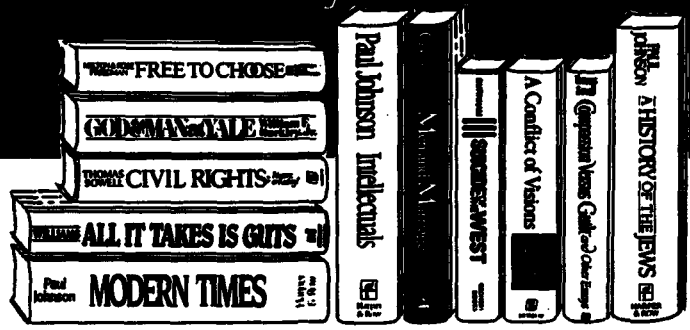

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thing derogatory about the Reverend Pat Robertson.

DAVID KAROL
Highland Park, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milton Himmelfarb's belittlement of the Jewish voter who blindly ignores the alleged anti-Semitic trends in the Democratic party comes ill to one who voted Republican because of this and now finds himself confronted with a President who blatantly—and unprecedentedly—adopts the Arab line against Israeli "occupation" and for "Palestinian rights."

The question that Jews with their liberal proclivities (who know all too well what it is to live in an illiberal world) face is: what is more perilous, the adoption by the United States of a position in support of the Arabs against Israel or the influence of Jesse Jackson in the Democratic party? I say the former, and aver that my Republican vote in the last election was an error.

FREDERIC WILE
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Milton Himmelfarb should address a fascinating question: how is it that the Orthodox are apparently the only Jewish group able to sense a clear threat to basic Jewish survival? And how is it that the Jews with the least Jewish education and Jewish commitment continue blindly in their habits of voting Democratic despite the shadows of Jesse Jackson and Louis Farrakhan?

Clearly, assimilationist tendencies continue in force among the Jews even when these tendencies are obviously self-destructive. Not only does the secular, liberal American Jew find no threat to Judaism in assimilationist manifestations like intermarriage; amazingly enough, he also sees no threat to himself from open anti-Semitism. . . .

[Rabbi] EMANUEL FELDMAN
Atlanta, Georgia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In a letter to COMMENTARY written four years ago I suggested, somewhat obliquely, that American Jewish voting patterns owed more to sharply divided Jewish religious perceptions than to differing political appraisals arising out of a common underlying perspective. Nothing has changed my mind since then. Milton Himmelfarb's research suggests that the gap between religious Jews (who vote overwhelmingly Republican in presidential elections) and the secular majority (who vote overwhelmingly Democratic) has simply become more institutionalized. . . .

As Mr. Himmelfarb and others have noted, religious Jews inhabit a world largely independent of secular political loyalties. Votes are determined in major degree by pragmatic considerations. . . .

The secular, by contrast, have adopted the civic religion (or their version of it) as their own. When Mr. Himmelfarb asks secular Jews to vote Republican for the narrow purpose of teaching the Democrats a lesson, he is asking them to do more than switch sides in a political game, albeit a serious one. He is asking them to apostatize. . . . Obviously at stake are powerful emotional ties, far transcending any worldly reality. Voting Democratic, for many Jews, is literally an act of faith.

Will anything alter this intense affiliation among the secular? I doubt it. It is not enough for liberal programs to fail or be abandoned. The Democrats would have to cease even to espouse liberal ideals. Even then, few secular Jews would switch to a Republican party which seems to derive most of its gusto from a populist-religious hard core and is otherwise essentially the same motley crew that nearly disappeared during the mid-70's. . . .

SETH A. HALPERN
Scarsdale, New York

MILTON HIMMELFARB writes:

It is not necessarily a compliment if someone calls you clever. Aristophanes is not complimenting Socrates when he has him cleverly making Unjust prevail over Just Logos, and for Milton it is Belial who "could make the worse appear/the better reason." The rabbinical tradition is a little kinder to cleverness, but only a little. The cleverness that goes with juridical keenness, a virtue for the rabbis of the Talmud and their successors, can spill over into frivolity, a vice. Sanhedrin (17a): "Only such a person may be appointed to the Sanhedrin as would be able to appeal to the authority of the Torah for asserting the cleanness of reptiles [which the Torah explicitly declares unclean]"; but 'Eruvin (13b): "In Rabbi Me'ir's generation he had no peer. Why then were his legal opinions not always accepted? His colleagues could never be sure of his true intent when he argued plausibly for declaring the unclean clean and the clean unclean." In Yiddish, "pig's foot—kosher" is disapproving.

Too many American Jews want to believe that a pig's foot is kosher.

Remember the numbers. In a survey of Jewish opinion last year that asked whether Jesse Jackson was anti-Semitic, 56 percent answered yes, 33 percent were not sure, and only 11 percent answered no. Then, asked which party they would probably vote for if Jackson were the Democratic vice-presidential candidate, 44 percent answered that they would probably vote Republican, 25 percent that they would probably vote Democratic, 30 percent that they did not know how they would vote, and 2 percent that they probably would not vote.

In short, a huge majority say that Jackson is or may be an anti-Semite, and a majority also say that they will or may vote for him for Vice President. They know about the one heartbeat separating vice presidency from presidency.

Imagine a survey of black opinion and a hypothetical Jesse Jillson, a white as widely distrusted by blacks as Jesse Jackson is by Jews. (Jillson is a loyal friend to the anti-black demagogue Louis Kharrafan.) Asked whether Jillson is a racist, nearly all blacks say he is or may be. Will most also say that they will or may vote Democratic if the Democratic party nominates him for Vice President? Of course they won't.

And so for any other predominantly Democratic group if the Democratic party nominates for Vice President anyone who repels its members. Only Jews are clever enough to persuade themselves that because the Democratic party nominates an enemy as potential President, they should try to elect him.

Now imagine that a general survey of American opinion asks those questions about a hypothetical Jesse Johnson and that the percentages come out the same. Each and every American Jewish union, conference, committee, league, congress, institute, and advisory council will reach a common conclusion: "Too many Gentiles will vote for a candidate even though they think he's an anti-Semite. They themselves need not be anti-Semitic. Most are probably

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non-anti-Semitic. We have to help them understand that non-anti-Semitism isn't enough. Nothing less than anti-anti-Semitism will do."

Since it was merely Jews who gave those non-anti-Semitic responses, the American Jewish unions, conferences, committees, leagues, congresses, institutes, and advisory councils have been uncharacteristically silent. Not a word to admonish Jews that Jewish non-anti-Semitism isn't enough, either. If anything is said at all, it recalls the verse repeated in Jeremiah (6:14 followed by 8:11): "They treat with unconcern My wounded people, assuring them, 'All is well, all is well,' when all is not well."

My old friend Hyman Bookbinder, good Democrat that he is, thinks all is well. I reported that in the Democratic primaries unspecified "liberals" gave illiberal Jackson fully 41 percent of their votes nationwide (50 percent in California!), while Jewish voters gave him only 8 percent nationwide (14 percent in California). Doesn't that show how sensible Jewish voters are? Why am I wringing my hands?

But nobody ever said that Jews *prefer* Jackson. In the primaries they could vote for other Democrats. In the opinion survey they had no choice. Before the survey was mailed out, the newspapers and the television talk shows had speculated that the Democratic convention might offer Jackson its nomination for Vice President and that he might accept. Hence the question: "If Jackson is the Democratic vice-presidential candidate . . . ?" The majority answered that in that case they would or might vote for Jackson. That is not my idea of sensible.

It is outdated campaign rhetoric to keep professing horror at some Baltic nobodies who were in Bush's nationalities division until they were exposed and fired. I call Jackson the loyal friend of Farrakhan because even the few Jews who deny that Jackson is an anti-Semite might find it hard to deny that Farrakhan is.

My last favorite Jewish politician was David Ben-Gurion. Mayor Koch says he voted for Dukakis. In his circumstances, what else could a Democratic politician say?

Jews like to believe they vote on the issues. Issues can be the good reasons of the educated rather than their true reasons. In 1984 a distinguished political scientist told me that his brother, a distinguished economist, liked Reagan's economic platform better than Mondale's but voted for Mondale. He had watched the Republican convention, and they didn't look like his kind of people.

Many Jews think of the Republican party as the enemy camp but three of the eight Jewish Senators are Republicans, two of them from states where Jews are less than 1 percent of the population.

In 1984 everyone agreed that Reagan had been more pro-Israel than any of his predecessors. Jews responded by giving him, almost uniquely, fewer votes than in 1980. Reagan's second term was as pro-Israel as the first. Jews responded by giving Bush equally few votes. Jews are too high-minded to reward friends.

They also think that unrequited favors should not stop coming. When Sununu was named the President's chief of staff, a leader of a conspicuously liberal Jewish union or congress had the nerve to warn that Jewish voters would thenceforth think twice about voting Republican!

McGovern's followers won control of the Democratic party in 1972 after they had assured Humphrey's defeat in 1968, either by playing hooky from the voting booth or by actually voting for Nixon. Boies Penrose, a Republican, formulated the regnant principle: if you have to choose between losing an election and losing control of your party, lose the election. So even strong Democrats should not have voted Democratic this time, especially since the election would have been lost regardless.

The socialist or revolutionary faith of the spiritual ancestors of most Left-of-Center, secularist Jews has been thinned down to what in America is called liberalism. Some of them are frank to characterize their tradition as secular messianism, implying that a religious Jew has less need of a substitute religion. Still under the spell of Voltaire's *écrasez l'infâme,* they shudder at the thought of religion—any religion—or of a morality rooted in religion affecting public life. An exception must be noted: black religion doesn't come under the interdict, whether in the person of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King or of the Reverend Jesse Jackson.

It is said that Prime Minister Thatcher's favorite bishop is the Chief Rabbi of England, for whom she arranged the title of nobility so that there would be one prelate in the House of Lords whom she could stand.

Although Jews typically favor a welfare state more than others with comparable occupations, incomes, and so on, Jews do not have a distinctive economic interest in such a state. If we must speak of interest, let us say that the Jewish interest is less a material than a psychic one.

Is there perhaps something that borders on racism in the readiness of so many to hint, or even to say aloud, that because Jesse Jackson is black his threat is not to be taken seriously?

Finally, consider a paradox in the American Jewish discussion of the politics of American Jews. Universalist or non-parochial Jews may be expected to stand politically to the Left of particularist or parochial Jews, and Jewish self-satisfaction and self-gratulation may be expected to go with particularism. But the hurrahs we hear these days are liberal Jews' hurrahs for Jewish liberalism, idealism, and unselfishness. You can almost hear them sighing, "If only everybody were like us!"

This is parochial—doubly parochial. Now it is not only that American Jews vote more liberal than American non-Jews. Now they vote more liberal than non-American Jews. Twenty-five years ago British Jews were even more "liberal" than American Jews, fully 95 percent of the Jewish MP's belonging to the Labor party. In a massive reversal, today 70 percent are Conservatives. The new American Jewish exceptionalism is one reason why I said that I know American Jews but am no longer sure I understand them.

A second reason is that when friends or relatives have done something particularly imprudent, particularly silly-clever, people say, "I don't understand you."

The Cuban Missiles

To the Editor of Commentary:

Patrick Glynn has effectively debunked the revisionist view of the Cuban missile crisis purveyed by McGeorge Bundy and others who seek to disparage the political importance of U.S. strategic superiority in the postwar period ["Nuclear Revisionism," March]. I would add to his analysis of the 1962 crisis in two respects.

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First, the Bundy view is not a recent phenomenon; it was a major theme of Kennedy-administration statements in the immediate wake of the crisis. In the winter and spring of 1962-63, George W. Ball, Robert S. McNamara, and Bundy himself publicly and repeatedly stressed the greater importance of U.S. local conventional and naval superiority in the crisis. The administration even cited the crisis as proof of the validity of "flexible response," the new NATO strategy it was in the process of urging on its allies in place of "massive retaliation." A parallel theme at the time also attributed our success to the limitation of our objectives (i.e., we did not ask for the removal of Castro), almost as if by analogy to the first theme about the limitation of means. In addition, officials drew lessons about the utility of controlled, limited, incremental escalation of force as a model for crisis management in the nuclear age (lessons transplanted rather clumsily, a few years later, to Indochina).

More "intellectual" than most administrations, the Kennedy team felt that the Cuban experience had "extraordinary pedagogical importance," as Bundy put it in a speech in Boston in early 1963. Its spokesmen thus used the crisis to claim vindication for the main lines of its foreign and defense policies. (See my "The Missiles of October: Twenty Years Later," COMMENTARY, October 1982.)

Second, the striking feature of the latest revisionism, to my mind, is the attempt to drain the missile crisis of its "pedagogical importance" with respect to facing down the Soviets. This goes even farther than Mr. Glynn indicates. One can quarrel with this or that Kennedy tactic, but I agree with Mr. Glynn that the near-universal perception that Khrushchev backed down is part of the historical reality. President Kennedy deserves credit for this. What is intriguing is the eagerness with which Bundy, McNamara, and Theodore Sorensen have recently begun to call attention to Kennedy's nervousness and readiness to make further concessions if the crisis had persisted. Apparently Kennedy did come closer to caving in than was known at the time. The two Harvard-sponsored conferences in 1987 provided evidence of this—that Kennedy was contemplating, for example, agreeing to a public trade of the missiles in Turkey. George F. Will found it fascinating to see Kennedy's former subordinates praising their leader by saying, in effect, that he "wanted to practice appeasement but calculated incorrectly."

One cannot quarrel with new revelations of fact. But I suspect that the eagerness to debunk the standard perception of the crisis has other purposes. The missile crisis in its standard version has been part of the Democratic party's honorable heritage of resistance to Soviet expansionism—the tradition of Harry Truman, Henry Jackson, and others. As centrist Democrats fight to save this tradition, Kennedy's seeming courage in October 1962 has been a model to invoke. Now these gentlemen—active participants in today's debates—seem to be claiming retrospectively that JFK was a McGovernite all along. I give Kennedy more credit than that.

Likewise with the January 1989 Moscow conference on the Cuban crisis, which brought together many more of the participants on all sides. Some of the same former U.S. officials came away persuaded that it was all our fault, since the Soviets genuinely feared a second U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cuba. In October 1964 Khrushchev's colleagues showed they had a sounder view: they did not credit him with saving Cuba from invasion; they booted him out for his recklessness.

PETER W. RODMAN
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I very much enjoyed reading Patrick Glynn's article. Although I found myself often in disagreement—I am still not convinced that Khrushchev (or Kennedy) would have been terribly cheerful about escalating the crisis no matter who had nuclear superiority in 1962—the essay is enormously provocative and carefully reasoned. And I certainly do agree with Mr. Glynn about the inappropriateness of comparing 1914 and 1962.

On one point I think Mr. Glynn's argument could be pushed a bit farther. He stresses most impressively the difference between a secret and a public deal on the Turkish missiles: its secrecy kept Khrushchev from being able publicly to proclaim a victory. But the secrecy of the agreement also meant that it was an extremely weak one. The U.S. could have later claimed never to have made an agreement, or that Robert Kennedy's assurances were misunderstood, or that while the U.S. had agreed to remove obsolete missiles it had reserved the right to replace them with better ones.

For this reason I suspect Khrushchev got little play from the agreement in the Politburo: "You call *that* an agreement? You really think we can trust the Americans to carry it out?" Better than nothing, I suspect, but not much.

JOHN MUELLER
University of Rochester
Rochester, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "Nuclear Revisionism," Patrick Glynn . . . disputes the idea that nuclear sufficiency in the form of "a survivable nuclear capability" is adequate to deter enemy aggression "regardless of the superiority or inferiority of forces on either side." . . . In my opinion, Mr. Glynn should make a distinction between an actual nuclear attack upon a country and aggressive activities by an opponent which seek to weaken a country's position, alliances, prestige, or international clout. I think a small nuclear force is adequate to prevent a nuclear attack, and increasing that force is not going to make an enemy attack more unthinkable. Thus, for the purpose of deterrence, I do not believe that parity or superiority is of any value.

I do think, however, that for purposes other than deterring a nuclear attack, the size of a nation's nuclear force is definitely of importance. It serves as a psychological tool which can be exploited—. . . what biologists, talking about lower animals, call "a threat display." It has been fortunate . . . that the Soviet Union never acquired nuclear superiority, . . . for the Russians would use it to bully concessions from the West. . . .

Writing about the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, Mr. Glynn connects the missile withdrawal by the Soviets with the fact of American nuclear superiority. In my opinion, this factor was irrelevant, for the Soviet Union was not about to . . . attack the U.S. with nuclear weapons even if the U.S. attacked its missiles. Even if the Soviets had had nuclear superiority at the time, such an attack would still have been certain suicide.

Mr. Glynn offers no evidence that the American superiority in nuclear weapons caused or influ-

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enced John F. Kennedy to decide finally to attack the missiles. . . . Indeed, subsequent statements by American leaders indicate that they actually did not regard American nuclear superiority as a significant factor in dealing with the crisis. Moreover, the conduct of America's leadership contradicts the widely held belief that Kennedy acted with superlative skill and bravery and that the crisis was a dazzling example of statesmanship. JFK actually conducted himself in a timid and confused manner and never showed himself reassured by U.S. nuclear superiority. . . .

At the start of the crisis, JFK demanded research on how the Russians had reacted to forceful action in the past, an odd query from a President who just months before had gone through a confrontation with the Russians over Berlin, and who supposedly possessed a phenomenal grasp of history. . . .

Khrushchev assumed he could get away with placing missiles in Cuba because JFK had impressed him as a weak and unassertive man. . . . Had Richard Nixon won the presidency in 1960, there would have been no missiles in Cuba because, though Khrushchev personally disliked Nixon, he respected him as a firm individual. . . .

Kennedy said at the time that he believed there was one chance in three that the crisis would end in nuclear war, and that he had no doubt Khrushchev would have started a nuclear war if he felt boxed into a corner—even though the Soviet Union's vital interests were in no way involved and even though it would have had nothing to gain by committing national suicide. JFK never seemed reassured by the overwhelming U.S. nuclear superiority, as he should have been according to Mr. Glynn's thesis. . . .

JOSEPH FORBES
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

PATRICK GLYNN writes:

Peter W. Rodman's seconding of my thesis is particularly welcome, since my essay focuses on an issue that, in his 1982 COMMENTARY article on the Cuban missile crisis, he essentially sidestepped. In that article, he had written that it was "fruitless" at the time of the crisis and "remains fruitless today" to debate whether nuclear or local conventional forces were more decisive, since the United States enjoyed superiority in both. I am

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glad—to judge from his letter—that, with respect to the role of nuclear weapons, he has now apparently come around to a more categorical view.

Indeed, my sense upon reading his article some years ago—and rereading it in preparing my recent essay—was that a stronger case for the decisiveness of nuclear superiority *could and should be made.* For too long, strategic commentators of a high caliber—not just Mr. Rodman, but even Raymond Aron back in the 1960's—had chosen to sidestep the Bundy-McNamara arguments rather than meet them head-on.

My point was this: if U.S. nuclear superiority had indeed been decisive in the missile crisis, as many of us—including, I would wager, Mr. Rodman—clearly felt, then one ought to be able to show it working in the actual crisis events. If this could be demonstrated through a "close reading" of the crisis, then the whole neorevisionist case for the "essential irrelevance" of nuclear weapons—i.e., Bundy's book and a number of others—would be called into question. That was my approach in reviewing Bundy, and to judge from Mr. Rodman's letter, it succeeded, at least for him.

This narrowness of focus precluded a review of the evolution of Bundy and McNamara's thinking over the past quarter-century. Mr. Rodman is right, of course, that the Kennedy administration was making this argument even in the 1960's. That is why I was careful to state in the article that Bundy and McNamara had championed these views "for some time." My chief concern, however, was to call the reader's attention to a new phenomenon with potentially far-reaching effects on the manner in which these issues are currently taught in universities, namely, neorevisionism; to have traced the evolution of Bundy's thinking would have been a digression.

However, by drawing attention to what has remained the same in McNamara and Bundy's thinking, Mr. Rodman arrives at a valuable formulation of what has changed—namely, that they are turning their backs irrevocably on the "Democratic party's honorable heritage of resistance to Soviet expansionism." Indeed, it is ironic that men like Bundy and McNamara, who owe their reputations to the Kennedy of cold-war fame, are now undermining the very reputation that originally sustained theirs. It is also ironic that they—who are using a manifestly tendentious interpretation of the Cuban missile crisis to promote a certain policy agenda—would not recognize when Soviet officials do the same. That is clearly what was going on during the recent Moscow conference on the crisis, when the Soviet participants apparently did their best to persuade the Americans present that war might indeed have occurred, no doubt in order to convince us of the dangers of confronting or challenging Soviet encroachments in the future. (Interestingly, Ray S. Cline, the senior CIA analyst during the crisis, wrote an article recently in the Washington *Post* disputing the retrospective claim by the Soviets that their missiles in Cuba had been armed.) At all events, with Mr. Rodman's basic assessment of these latter phenomena, I would wholeheartedly agree.

I was surprised to read John Mueller's comments on my article, since Mr. Mueller is himself one of the leading neorevisionists. I have not read Mr. Mueller's book, *Retreat from Doomsday*, but I have read his recent article in *International Security*. The gist of the piece is contained in its title: "The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons." Since Mr. Mueller liked my article so well, I wish he would think harder about its implications. It seems to me he evades my conclusions by setting up a straw man. Neither I nor anybody else is contending that Kennedy or Khrushchev would have been "cheerful" about escalating the crisis. That is not the point. The point is that because of Soviet nuclear inferiority, Khrushchev was not in a position to escalate, whereas because of U.S. nuclear superiority Kennedy was in a position to make a U.S. threat of escalation quite credible—credible enough to end the crisis and force Khrushchev to back down. On October 26 and 27, 1962, the "detail" of U.S. nuclear superiority mattered, and mattered greatly. In other words, nuclear weapons were very relevant indeed to the crisis outcome.

Joseph Forbes makes a number of points about the missile crisis, some valid, some considerably less so, but he somehow misses mine. The final connection between U.S. nuclear superiority and the crisis outcome lies not primarily, as he would appear to believe, in Kennedy's behavior but in Khrushchev's. The issue, to repeat, was not whether Kennedy would have ultimately escalated the crisis but the fact that Khrushchev believed he might and backed down. Notwithstanding Kennedy's behind-the-scenes tergiversations, it was U.S. nuclear capability that made the threat of a U.S. conventional attack on Cuba all too credible from Khrushchev's point of view.

However, Mr. Forbes's letter raises a larger point that it is worth taking a moment to address. The rigid, mechanistic distinction that he and so many others draw between deterrence of central war, on the one hand, and what is sometimes called "extended deterrence," on the other, has ill-served American strategy for many years. The notion that there is some minimum nuclear capability which will deter major nuclear war even though such capability will not guarantee us against political blackmail is inherently fallacious: it ignores the nature of political conflict and the mechanism by which wars usually begin. If we cannot deter blackmail, we cannot deter war. That was the lesson of Munich in this century. Deterrence that cannot be "extended" to cover our vital interests and those of our allies does not deter. At the moment when we become vulnerable to blackmail, it is already too late. And that is one important reason why strategic superiority matters.

Portrait of a Liberal

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Three cheers and three cheers more for Midge Decter's article, "The Professor and the L-Word" [February]. Clever, insightful, and long-overdue, the article exposes academic cant and chutzpah. It is the sharpest article you have published in years. I'm still chuckling.

SHELDON C. SELLER
Queens College
Flushing, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Midge Decter's essay is superb, even Jamesian and tragic. When I mention the name of Henry James, what I have in mind is "The Beast in the Jungle" and the tragedy of the wasted self, the self betrayed. Midge Decter's prose here is wholly equal to her subject, and the piece is unforgettable.

JEFFREY HART
Dartmouth College
Hanover, New Hampshire

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TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Midge Decter has the ironic tone down pat. Her academic would be laughable if he were not such a pathetic instance of the modern rudderless intellectual. . . .

I must say, though, that I was hoping Miss Decter's professor would come full circle and get caught in the neoconservative tide; but then it is not exactly a tide yet, and there is little in it that would make him very content with himself. I forget who it was who first said that Catholics go to church because they know they are sinners, and Protestants because they know they are not. Well, liberals know they are saviors; neoconservatives are not so sure.

THOMAS PUTNAM
Amherst, New York

Civil Rights & the CP

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joshua Muravchik has written an important critical review of Taylor Branch's *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-63* [Books in Review, April]. I thoroughly agree with Mr. Muravchik when he faults Branch for dismissing the issue of Communist influence on the civil-rights movement. I disagree with him, however, when he writes that . . . the Communists' contribution to the movement was especially flawed by ulterior motives . . . and that the Communists eventually became "big promoters of the Black Panther party." . . .

In declaring that the Communists had ulterior motives, Mr. Muravchik is using a double standard. Communists, like everyone else, often have many motives for doing what they do. Would he speak of the ulterior motives of Jews involved in the civil-rights movement? Of Roman Catholics? Of the Kennedys? . . .

The Communists had been engaged in the struggle for civil rights in the South long before it became popular. They helped save the Scottsboro boys and Angelo Herndon in the 30's; they were involved in defying segregation laws and building integrated unions in the 40's; and they supported the civil-rights movement in the 50's and 60's. . . .

Mr. Muravchik's assertion about the Communists and the black-power movement is faulty. In the summer of 1966, when Stokely Carmichael first coined the slogan, "black power," on the Meredith march in Mississippi, the official Communist newspaper was almost alone in refusing to report, much less support, the black-nationalist slogan which was then headlined throughout the country. Although about one-fifth of that week's coverage in the *Worker* concerned the Mississippi march, it omitted mentioning the slogan that was rocking the nation. Indeed, the major radical organization that Carmichael once belonged to was the vehemently anti-Communist Young People's Socialist League, and he associated with anti-Communist socialists Tom Kahn and Bayard Rustin. When Carmichael began demanding "black power," most popular-front leftists, and probably most Communists, opposed him and continued instead to espouse the ideal of integration, at least until the end of 1968. . . .

Much of the history of the civil-rights movement has been written by social democrats and (more recently) by black nationalists, leaving some of the story untold. There should be greater awareness of the roles of Communists and radicals, as well as of Republicans, businessmen, and Jews (remember when blacks in the Mississippi movement wore *yarmulkes* in appreciation of the Jewish presence in the movement?) and others. For it took many types of people with all sorts of motivations to change the South and make it, and America, a more democratic society.

HUGH MURRAY
Jackson Heights, New York

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK writes:

Hugh Murray is right in saying, as I did, that Communists made significant contributions to the civil-rights movement. They also made significant contributions to destroying the movement by embracing "black power" and eventually concentrating their energies on the promotion of the Black Panther party, a crazy, violent, criminal group that stood opposed to every principle of the civil-rights movement. In his attempt to exonerate them for this, Mr. Murray makes both analytical and historical points. His historical points are red herrings. So what if Stokely Carmichael was close to Bayard Rustin and Tom Kahn in the years before he went off the deep end? (Surely Mr. Murray doesn't mean to imply that Rustin and Kahn supported "black power.") So what if the Communist party hesitated a year or two before it threw in with black nationalism?

Mr. Murray's analytical point—that everyone has ulterior motives—is more interesting, but also wrong. Jews and Catholics were not sent into the civil-rights movement by their churches, as Communists were by their party. Jews and Catholics, if motivated to join the movement by their religious beliefs, did so because they believed that the cause was intrinsically right or just. To Communists, in contrast, no cause is right or just intrinsically, but only insofar as it serves the single ultimate cause of Communism (defined as the triumph of the party). Communists regard social movements as "arenas" in which they participate for the sole purpose of advancing the party or the goals of the Kremlin. They have no respect for the well-being of those movements themselves. This attitude was expressed with brilliant clarity in Lenin's masterpiece *"Left-Wing" Communism—An Infantile Disorder*: "We must . . . agree to make any sacrifice, and even—if need be—to resort to various stratagems, artifices, and illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges, as long as we get into the trade unions, remain in them, and carry on Communist work within them at all costs." Thus Communists in the American labor movement encouraged labor militancy during the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact regardless of the effects on strategic production, but they became the champions of the "no-strike pledge" as soon as Hitler invaded the USSR. Thus, too, did Communists go from helping to build the civil-rights movement to helping to destroy it—all for the good of the party. Any just accounting of their contributions must record both roles.

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The Dangers Beyond Containment

Patrick Glynn

Since the dawn of the 20th century, Western societies have recurrently passed through periods when they imagined that the problems of international politics had either been solved or were imminently on their way to solution. These periods have been times of powerful optimism, bordering on euphoria. They have been marked by certain common themes: a belief in the ascendancy of economic forces over political and military ones; a belief in the obsolescence of major war; and a belief in the unprecedented and irreversible character of contemporary developments, rendering the more sobering lessons of history, even very recent history, irrelevant.

The first such period, extending from 1906 to 1914, culminated in "Norman Angellism," a European-wide political movement on the eve of World War I, animated by the faith that major war had become cost-ineffective and hence irrational in modern times. The second period of high international hopes ran for nearly twenty years, between 1919 and 1939, peaking in 1928 when the major nations—including all the future belligerents of World War II—signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact, forswearing forever the use of war as "an instrument of national policy." The third bout of euphoria was brief—a matter of mere months after the Hiroshima explosion and V-J day in 1945—and was cut short by Soviet moves in Iran, Poland, and elsewhere. The fourth, also brief, arose in the mid-1950's, following the death of Stalin and the first postwar summit meeting, producing the famous but short-lived "spirit of Geneva." The fifth extended unevenly from the mid-1960's (when, for example, strategist Thomas Schelling pronounced the "cold war" to be "dead") until the late 1970's, with a peak under Richard Nixon in 1972. The most recent such period began in the closing months of the Reagan administration and is overtaking us with blinding speed today.

In the past each of these periods has been brought to an end by a major war or a series of grave international crises. Indeed, each has contained within it the seeds of its own destruction. In each case, influenced by their optimism about the international future, Western governments have pursued unguarded policies, destined to make the world a more dangerous place.

Though the present generation seems confident that it can escape this harsh verdict of history—and though one recent writer has even declared an "end to history"—there is every reason to suppose that the outcome in our own time will be the same. Today the conviction is nigh universal that the world is becoming a safer place. But as in the past, this very conviction is helping to make the world more dangerous. For with a blitheness equaling the folly of any earlier generation, we are preparing to disassemble, piece by piece, the structure that has guaranteed peace for upward of forty years.

The proximate source of the current Western optimism, of course, lies in the bold foreign and domestic policies of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. But the present Western mood also has specific and complex roots in our own political culture. To understand the reception that Gorbachev has been accorded, we must begin searching closer to home.

In examining the current bout of euphoria, perhaps the most curious and surprising thing we find is that it is coming more from the Right than from the Left. In part, this development is an outgrowth of the domestic political battle. For at least a decade, the American Right has been using the theme of optimism, rather successfully, as a tactic against the American Left. The Reagan presidency was almost synonymous with optimism, and this was no accident. For under Reagan, optimism was more than a mood; it was a political weapon. In 1980, Reagan used optimism to defeat Jimmy Carter, who had alienated many voters by his sour disposition and his famous sermon on "malaise." In 1984, Reagan revived the theme again with the slogan, "It's morning in America." George Bush was careful to deploy optimism, with essentially equal success, against Michael Dukakis in 1988.

As superficial as it might seem at first glance, the debate over optimism and pessimism has not been without seriousness or substance. At a certain level, it has been a debate about the future of the West. At a time when the dominant view among

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Western intellectuals was that American society was morally bankrupt, that capitalism was doomed, that the Western way of life was dragging the world to the brink of worldwide ecological catastrophe, a neoconservative intellectual movement emerged to argue that capitalism was in fact improving the future, that life was mostly good and basically becoming better, that the future was bright. The coming together of Reagan's temperamental optimism with the arguments of the neoconservatives—including supply-side economists who predicted, quixotically as it turned out, that tax cuts would increase revenues—helped create a powerful popular groundswell in favor of what was, in many respects, a traditionalist agenda in foreign and domestic policy.

Reagan's optimism had many benefits. In a sense, the greatest successes of his presidency were psychological. The restoration of Western self-confidence—economic, military, and political—was a critical achievement. It not only dispelled the anxieties of the 1970's but had important effects on the world balance of power. But tactics can outlive their usefulness, and there can be too much even of a good thing. Such is the case with the political optimism that dominates much conservative thinking about foreign policy today.

REAGAN himself is partly to blame. Ultimately, Reagan's great asset as a politician—his overweening confidence in the power and reality of his own visions—also proved to be a great flaw. This President who thought that life, like the movies, should have a happy ending was willing to produce such an ending even at the expense of some of the most important strategic gains achieved by his administration. His relationship with Gorbachev during the last two years of his presidency falls into this category. By all reports, Reagan was literal-minded and sincere about his policies in his last eighteen months of office. He believed in disarmament, and apparently he believed in Gorbachev; but he also had a strong desire, as a politician and a leading man, to ride off triumphantly into the sunset. This he sought to accomplish first of all with the INF treaty.

Politically and tactically the INF treaty proved to be a good thing for the Republican party—in a sense, too good. It robbed the Democrats of the arms-control issue—probably their only foreign-policy issue of real appeal—in the 1988 election. It also dramatized, in very concrete terms, the value of the sound slogan, "peace through strength." But it did so in a rather paradoxical and ultimately destructive way. By showing that military strength could lead to radical disarmament, Reagan in the end did far more to whet the Western appetite for radical disarmament than to shore up Western support for military strength.

Indeed, as recent events in West Germany have increasingly shown, the INF treaty was not a victory, but a terrible political blunder. The concept at the core of the treaty—the so-called "zero option" requiring total elimination of both U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range missiles—has engendered a surge of popular West German anti-nuclear sentiment, which has translated into near-repudiation on the part of the West German government of NATO's strategy of flexible response.

Moreover, the hasty and imprudent manner in which the treaty was concluded probably did more to damage our relations with Bonn than any event since World War II, including American tergiversation and inaction in the face of Soviet construction of the Berlin Wall. In particular, after Gorbachev's surprise demand for the elimination of West Germany's own Pershing Ia missiles as a condition for the treaty, the Kohl government found itself in a highly exposed position—its reluctance to sacrifice the missiles being the only thing standing between the Reagan administration and a dramatic disarmament agreement for which the Americans were obviously very eager, not least in order to distract from the Iran-*contra* scandal. There is every reason to suppose that the crisis in Bonn over the Pershing Ia's, precipitated by Washington's rush to agreement in 1987, amounted to an epiphany for German conservatives—a moment of truth in relations with the United States comparable to that faced by French and British elites vis-à-vis Eisenhower in 1956. In effect, the INF treaty was West Germany's Suez. Far from strengthening NATO, the treaty dealt a severe and, perhaps it will be seen with time, fatal blow to the core relationship of the Atlantic alliance.

THE second element of Reagan's happy ending was his declaration that democracy and capitalism have won, producing irreversible liberalization in the Communist world. This notion that free-market principles and democratic processes have been vindicated, that history itself has refuted Communism, is enormously attractive. There has no doubt been a certain pleasure among conservatives in watching the Left squirm as the socialist ideal appears to dissolve before world scrutiny. And there is no doubt a grain of truth in the assertion. Yet there are important qualifications to the supposed victory of democracy and capitalism even today.

In the first place, to the degree that this victory has occurred, it was produced by specific decisions and accomplishments. There was a critical economic recovery in the United States, accomplished chiefly by enduring a recession, in the course of which President Reagan, showing exceptional political courage, shielded rather than undercut the Federal Reserve. There was a decision to reverse the decline in U.S. military spending. Finally, there was the successful deployment of INF missiles in Europe, in the face of enormous pressure from the Soviets and from peace activists—an accomplishment that reaffirmed the existence of

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NATO and the influence of the United States in Europe, when both were in serious question. Had any one of these issues—or for that matter a number of others—been decided differently, the future of democracy and of capitalism might look very different today.

The point is that the effect of these decisions was to maintain the shield of military power and alliances behind which Western societies are free to prosper. The democratic idea may have triumphed—or at least for the moment survived. But there is a tendency today to forget that this idea has large armies, alliances, and a massive nuclear arsenal to defend it. Without such appurtenances, the democratic idea would unfortunately find itself as defenseless against the dark forces of the age as did the slaughtered Chinese students in Tiananmen Square.

Indeed, as the recent events in China have so dramatically reminded us, endings are not always happy, and trends in the Communist world and elsewhere are not always as predictable as we might hope. Nor is it self-evident that international trends today are universally in our favor. On the one hand, Communist ideology is said to be dying. On the other hand, Mikhail Gorbachev, the avatar of this supposedly dead ideology, may be the most popular man in Europe. On the one hand, the Communist world is in deep turmoil, and the Soviet empire seems shaken to its very foundations. On the other hand, NATO is in deep crisis, narrowly saved from rupture by deft public-relations maneuvering on the part of the President of the United States. On the one hand, Poland and Hungary seem to be edging toward more pluralistic domestic political arrangements. But on the other hand, West Germany, whose strategic position in Europe is far more vital and whose economy is a far more glittering prize than either of these two bankrupt socialist regimes, is edging away from its Western partners and moving toward ever closer cooperation with the Soviet Union and the East bloc. The conventional wisdom is that Communism is disintegrating, but in reality it is an open question which is disintegrating faster: the Soviet empire, or the Western alliance system which has contained this empire for the past forty-plus years.

The notion that we can easily afford to dispense with this alliance system is among the most dangerous of the many illusions now abroad. One unfortunate consequence of the present euphoria is the emergence of the myth of an "ordinary" or "natural" American foreign policy unlike the one we have pursued for the past forty-odd years. One commentator, for example, predicts the resurgence of a "19th-century-like world," when the United States "lived rather easily" with the "endless ups and downs" of global politics minus any alliances or extensive military power. Another commentator notes that the large military we have maintained for the past forty years is "something entirely new in American history."

True, for most of our history we did not maintain a large military establishment or establish alliances with foreign powers. But for most of our history the average Atlantic crossing took in excess of a week, there were no airplanes, and the Panama Canal did not exist. For most of our history, foreign trade (i.e., merchandise imports plus exports) stood at something less than 8 percent of U.S. GNP. Perhaps most important, for most of our history, Great Britain headed a mighty empire and was capable by itself of guaranteeing the European, and the world, balance of power.

It is a fact that we did not maintain a significant military establishment even after World War I, but to the degree that we failed to do so, it was a massive blunder. The disappearance of American power from Europe at the end of World War I, and the devolution of American naval power in the Pacific owing to ill-advised arms-control agreements in the 1920's and 1930's, were probably the two major, long-term causes of World War II.

We should not forget, indeed, that both world wars of this century originated largely because of the failure of democracies to form and maintain strong alliances—France and Britain before World War I and America, France, and Britain before World War II. In short, nothing is more likely to set the stage for World War III than the slow dissolution of NATO.

To add to our sense of paradox, the crisis in NATO today has been precipitated in large part by heightened West German anxieties about nuclear war. The contradiction implicit in West German worries about short-range Lance missiles, armed with nuclear warheads under the control of the United States, betrays the inconsistency in present-day thinking about the future. On the one hand, such missiles are now said to be less necessary or even unnecessary because we are moving toward a more peaceful world. On the other hand, West Germans are said to be extremely anxious because such missiles would strike on or near their nation's territory "in the event of war." Yet the only eventuality that would occasion the use of Lance missiles would be a Soviet attack on the Federal Republic of Germany. West German fears are themselves evidence of a certain subliminal undercurrent of doubt beneath all the heady optimism.

There is a real change here from the early 1980's when individual leaders mastered events, reversing seemingly irreversible currents of history. This was true not merely of Ronald Reagan but also clearly of Margaret Thatcher, and even of Helmut Kohl, whose admirable resolve in the face of overwhelming political pressure made possible NATO's successful counterdeployment of INF missiles in 1983. In the late 1980's, however, events are overmastering Western leaders. Nothing showed this more clearly than the NATO summit in late May.

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Given the gravity of NATO's crisis, President Bush's surprise proposal linking U.S. troop cuts with more-than-matching troop cuts by the USSR was understandably greeted with relief. Nor was the proposal, in essence, a bad one: it slowed the trend toward denuclearization in Germany by linking further negotiations on theater-nuclear arms to cuts in conventional weapons, and it slowed the trend toward isolationism in the United States by linking cuts in U.S troops to far greater cuts by the Soviets. But clearly, the President had been compelled, by a combination of West German public opinion and the continuous harassment of the U.S. media, into making a dramatic initiative, which included concessions (e.g., on NATO aircraft) that he would otherwise have probably tried to avoid. Prime Minister Thatcher emerged from that meeting with oddly diminished stature, apparently helpless in the face of developments over which she obviously had no real say or control. The buffeting of Helmut Kohl by public opinion in his own country, meanwhile, was both comic and sad.

Skeptics of the present détente sometimes compare it with the détente of the 1970's. Yet the differences—both in the world and in Western consciousness—clearly go much deeper. Of the euphoric periods of the past, the present era bears perhaps the closest resemblance to the 1920's, when Western leaders found themselves similarly helpless before powerful currents of pacifistic public opinion. Then, too, Western economies were prospering. Then, too, there was every reason to believe that humanity's future was bright. Then, too, the West's major enemy appeared to be mellowing, seeking accommodation and integration into Europe. Then, too, détente was promoted by basically conservative politicians—figures like Austen Chamberlain in Britain, and Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and Herbert Hoover in the United States. And then, too, statesmanship was a matter of highly public meetings—a matter of summitry or "conference" diplomacy—that became hopelessly entangled with public relations.

During the late 1920's, as at present, there were leaders—for one, the French Foreign Minister, Aristide Briand—who understood plainly enough the underlying realities of power politics and the military requirements of Western security. However, like President Bush in Brussels, Briand was forced to explicate the problems of arms using the language of disarmament, and to communicate the imperatives of security using the platitudes of peace. The result of all this was that Western diplomats produced effects that were largely the opposite of what they thought they were achieving.

In October 1925, the foreign ministers of England, France, and Germany met in the lakeside town of Locarno, Switzerland—along with delegations from Belgium and Italy—to conclude a series of pacts guaranteeing the Franco-German and Belgo-German frontiers. As a result of Locarno, Germany was permitted to join the League of Nations. The Rhineland was eventually emptied of occupation soldiers, and the Allied Control Commission which had enforced German disarmament was removed. These were hailed (even by so prescient an observer as Winston Churchill) as moves normalizing relations with Germany. What Locarno really did, however, was inadvertently to open the way to the resurgence and rearmament of Germany by removing some of the key mechanisms that had enforced its disarmament in the wake of the war.

There are striking similarities between the diplomacy of the German Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann in the 1920's and that of Mikhail Gorbachev today. Celebrated in his time as a great peacemaker and humanitarian—he actually shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Briand in 1926—Stresemann was revealed years later by his private papers to have been pursuing a cynical policy of realpolitik, designed to revive Germany as a military force and a great power. One major aspect of this policy was systematic strategic deception concerning Germany's rearmament—including a secret and illegal military collaboration with Soviet Russia designed to set the stage for the reconstruction of German armed forces forbidden under Versailles.

Much as Gustav Stresemann sought to disassemble the Versailles agreement that contained Weimar Germany, so Mikhail Gorbachev is seeking to disassemble the alliance structure that has contained the Soviet Union. Indeed, one great incongruity in Gorbachev's profile as peacemaker has been the intensity of the Soviet campaign against the Atlantic alliance. Over the past several months, the Soviets have done everything imaginable within a framework of détente—and much that seems inconsistent with détente—to disrupt U.S. relations with West Germany.

In mid-May, while on a visit to Bonn, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze went so far as to threaten deliberate Soviet violation of the INF treaty—halting required destruction of SS-23 missiles—if West Germany permitted NATO to proceed with modernization of the Lance (a missile clearly *permitted* under the INF agreement). For those who recalled the sustained Soviet campaign of intimidation against NATO during the Euromissile episode of the early 1980's, Shevardnadze's remarks conveyed a peculiar sense of *déjà vu*. Even the White House was moved to observe that the threat made "clear that Soviet 'new thinking' has not yet overcome the old."

What could be behind this Soviet preoccupation with the Lance missile? Are we seeing, amid all the sophistication and "new thinking" of the Gorbachev era, a resurgence of the traditional Soviet neurosis, the legendary and insatiable Soviet sense of insecurity? Yet no one could seriously suppose that 88 Lance missile launchers threaten

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the Soviet Union—especially when we know from German complaints that these missiles would strike only West or East German territory anyway. Notably, Shevardnadze continued to harp on the missiles after the NATO summit, and Gorbachev was careful to bring them up during his state visit to Bonn. Why? The only logical answer is that Moscow understands these missiles to be a supreme irritant in West Germany's relations with the alliance. By whatever levers are at its disposal, the Soviet government seems determined to split West Germany off from the protection afforded by NATO and the United States.

GORBACHEV'S metaphor for NATO is the Rape of Europa. "There is an old Greek myth about the abduction of Europe," he writes in *Perestroika*. "The fairy-tale subject has suddenly become very topical today. It goes without saying that Europe as a geographical notion will stay in place. Sometimes, however, one has the impression that the independent policies of West European nations have been abducted, that they are being carried off across the ocean; that national interests are farmed out under the pretext of protecting security."

In Gorbachev's telling of this myth, the United States is cast in the figure of Zeus, stealing away the sovereignty of European states across the Atlantic. But anyone who has seen the great Titian painting of Europa riding the bull might suspect that Gorbachev has at times imagined himself in the god's role—particularly with regard to that quintessential Lady Europa, the Federal Republic of Germany.

To return once more to the 1920's, it is useful to recall that it was cooperation with Germany, then in a victimized condition, that gave the Soviet Union its start in life—not just militarily but economically. In 1922, to the astonishment of the international community, the USSR and Germany concluded the Treaty of Rapallo under which the two nations forgave each other's financial claims and restored normal relations. Suspected even at the time of including secret military and economic protocols, the treaty was a critical turning point in the history of the Soviet regime. At a moment of military weakness and total economic collapse for the USSR, Rapallo inaugurated a nearly decade-long period of economic and secret military collaboration (some Russo-German military activity even predated Rapallo). While America and Europe provided the Soviet Union with food relief to fend off starvation, Germany began the task of restructuring the Soviet economy and equipping the military.*

The gains for Germany were largely illicit. Forbidden under the Versailles treaty to maintain a real military or navy, Germany was able to train the Reichswehr on Soviet soil and produce forbidden weapons in the munitions plants left over from czarist times.

But the gains for the Soviet Union were even greater. The Bolsheviks, having essentially brought the Russian economy to a standstill through arbitrary and foolish economic policies—inflating the ruble to zero, doubling or tripling wages, placing unskilled proletarians in charge of factories, all of which caused a radical drop in productivity and in production itself and prompted skilled managers to flee to the countryside or abroad—were able to draw on German technological and managerial expertise to restart their industry. By the early 1920's, roughly 2,000 German engineers were employed in the Soviet Union. Factories began operating again, and the economy again began to grow.

The great German arms manufacturer Krupp became deeply involved in the effort, sending men and equipment to plough 65,000 acres in the Caspian steppe and providing the Soviet Union with the latest Krupp locomotives. At the same time, Krupp technicians supervised the production of artillery shells at Russian munitions plants. Also, submarine pens were built in Leningrad, and according to at least one source, submarines were constructed. Perhaps the most active production was in military aircraft. Remarkably, the world's first all-metal airplane was built in the Soviet Union, during the 1920's, at the aircraft factory at Fili, under the illegal supervision of the famous German firm Junkers, ten years ahead of equivalent American prototypes. In all, the arrangement amounted to a significant transfer of military and civilian technology to the Soviet Union.

It should not surprise us, therefore, that the Soviet Union, now in another economic crisis, should once again look to Germany for help in recovery. During Gorbachev's recent visit to Bonn, the economic relationship received even more attention than arms control. That relationship is growing. Already West German companies have 70 joint ventures in the Soviet Union. The two countries signed twelve co-production agreements in 1988, bringing the number of such agreements to 30. Mercedes-Benz is negotiating to build a Mercedes 190 plant in the Soviet Union, and programs have been established in West Germany to train hundreds of Soviet managers and engineers.

Once again, too, as in the 1920's, the Soviet Union is playing on German resentment and vulnerability, though resentment and vulnerability of a different kind. As an economic superpower—its GNP nearly two-thirds those of France and England combined—and in a condition of total military dependence upon the United States, West Germany today is moved by both fear and

* See Anthony C. Sutton, *Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development*, 3 vols. (Hoover Institution Press, 1968-73), and, among other sources, Barton Whaley, *Secret German Rearmament 1919-1939* (University Publications of America, 1984).

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wounded pride. The fear is linked to the evident undependability of the American security guarantee, as shown by the INF treaty and America's behavior regarding Pershing Ia's. The pride is a natural expression of West Germany's national character and a natural outgrowth of its economic success. Both forces—fear and pride—are leading West Germany to attempt to use its massive economic wealth to solve its security dilemma (which in the wake of the INF treaty no longer seems soluble by military means) through economic appeasement.

At the root of this policy is the hope that economic power alone can be deployed to democratize Hungary and Poland, and perhaps eventually other nations in Central Europe, and to tame the Soviet Union. Yet freed of its bond with Washington, West Germany will not become stronger. On the contrary, given the wild disparity between its economic and military power, either West Germany will become totally subservient to Moscow, a kind of cash cow to be milked ruthlessly for Soviet and East-bloc economic recovery, or Bonn may overreach, in which case the danger of war would arise again. For in a Europe emptied of U.S. military power, and in which West Germany had become deeply involved in the internal affairs of Poland and Hungary, instability in those latter countries might well lead Moscow to declare—whether with genuine indignation or as a pretext—that the Germans had gone too far, and that the time had finally come to move across the Elbe.

One reason we may have not been as concerned as we might be about these developments is that we are by and large neglecting to focus on the economic dimension of Western security. Yet NATO's purpose has not simply been to deter Soviet attack; it has also been to deny the financial and technological resources of Europe to the Soviet military machine. Today opinion leaders in the West are almost certainly underestimating the degree to which Soviet economic development has always been essentially parasitic—i.e., dependent on Western technology, obtained by both legal and illegal means—and the degree to which the confrontation of the Reagan era closed off avenues to this technology.

Not that the technology controls enforced by institutions like the Coordinating Committee (CoCom)—the informal organization including most NATO members that attempts to police the eastward technology flow—were ever entirely or even mostly effective. But there are degrees of success, and clearly it was much more difficult for the Soviet Union to gain access to Western technology during the Reagan years—especially after the tightening of CoCom's policies in the early 1980's—than during the previous decade.

The assumption today is that the Soviet Union must liberalize or at least reform internally to begin to generate its own indigenous technologies. But even if the Soviet Union does succeed in reforming its technological infrastructure, such reforms will be years in producing real effects. In the meantime, there is a pressing need to obtain sophisticated military technologies and to increase hard-currency earnings in order to keep up with Western military developments and keep the Soviet empire afloat. No wonder, then, that Moscow has thus far shown no real disposition to abandon its old habits of acquiring technology largely from abroad—by both trading and stealing.

According to recent speeches by both the Director of Central Intelligence and the former Deputy Director, Soviet espionage to gain technology has in fact increased under Gorbachev. Thousands of Soviet and East-bloc personnel are involved in operations to gather Western high technology. The Soviet KGB and GRU (military intelligence) actually work from massive and detailed lists, specifying particular items produced by particular companies, for which the central authorities have determined the Soviet military has a need. The methods are old-fashioned—bribery, blackmail, even obtaining goods literally burglarized from firms in Silicon Valley.

Since at least the 1930's, American officials have intermittently entertained ambitions of "opening up" the Soviet Union. Such ambitions seem widespread today. What we are failing to grasp, perhaps in consequence, is the degree to which Gorbachev is seeking in his own fashion to "open up" the West—to gain access to Western capital, Western technology, and even Western military secrets which have been closed off in so many ways as a result of a half-decade of explicit confrontation. If the boundaries between alliances are loosened; if contacts with Western scientists can be expanded; if new joint ventures can be concluded (hundreds of such ventures have already been registered and hundreds more are under negotiation); if Western technology restrictions can be loosened—then the avenues, overt and covert, legal and illegal, through which the Soviet Union can gain access to technology, including the most militarily sensitive technologies, will greatly expand.*

Détente, in fact, serves a threefold goal for Moscow. First, by improving the tone of relations with the West, the Soviet Union is likely to forestall deployment of the new generation of high-tech Western weapons. Second, by opening up the West it will gain direct access to Western technology (and thereby may even begin designing weapons which we ourselves, moved by détente and budgetary considerations, will not deploy). And finally, by disrupting the Western alliance system, it will gain freer access to the rich finan-

* For an assessment of Western vulnerability to such Soviet operations, see David G. Wigg, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy Analysis, "Realism and East-West Policy: The Economic Dimension," speech before the American Bar Association Conference on International Economics and National Security, May 10, 1989.

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cial and technological resources of Western Europe and perhaps eventually Japan and the Pacific Rim.

Of course it is the conjunction of dramatic external and internal changes that has persuaded many Western observers that what we are confronting is not merely a tactical shift in Soviet policy, however dramatic, but a fundamental change in the objectives of the Soviet state. "If we were simply witnessing a new flexibility and imagination in Soviet foreign policy," Graham Fuller has written, "while life went on as usual back in the gray confines of the Soviet state, then we would be justified in believing that we were simply confronted with much more capable—and dangerous—tactical Soviet skills abroad. But this time, it is decidedly *not* business as usual back in Moscow."

Yet even here our memories may be betraying us. "If one studies the Soviet government under Lenin carefully (and this characteristic has persisted down to our own days)," Adam Ulam noted many years ago, "one will come up with a startling conclusion: *it is in times of crisis, of real emergency, that it has allowed most freedom and tolerated dissent.*"

Periods of internal reform and even liberalization are hardly without precedent in Soviet history. As Edward Jay Epstein reminds us in his recent book, *Deception*, even Stalin instituted a series of reforms which he called "reconstruction" or *perestroika*, in the mid-1930's. At that time the Soviet dictator even promulgated a constitution promising American-style liberties. *Time* then reported: "Last week Russia, having come of age, allowed her people all the fun and trapping of a real national election . . . to vote not in public by a show of hands but in private and in a red-curtained booth, by secret ballot, according to their own convictions."

Still, the period to which Gorbachev has obviously paid closest attention is the period of the New Economic Policy during the early 1920's. It is interesting that in Gorbachev's book *Perestroika* nearly all the references to Lenin's vast corpus of writings are taken from the 1921-24 period. Indeed, there is every reason to believe that this period of Soviet history serves as a conscious model for Gorbachev's own endeavors.

From the West's standpoint, this is not a hopeful conclusion. It is true that the Bolsheviks under Lenin decided that for a time they needed capitalists, both indigenous and foreign, to rebuild their economy. It is true that a certain amount of small entrepreneurship was permitted. It is true that restrictions on civil liberties were markedly loosened. But in the end all this was reversed—the liberties reneged upon, the capitalists (eventually including American firms like RCA, General Electric, DuPont, International Harvester, and Ford) expelled, most of the foreign factories effectively confiscated.

There is a vague sense today among left-leaning Western Sovietologists and certain Communist-party spokesmen in the Soviet Union that if Lenin had survived the NEP would have stayed in place, but there is also a great deal of evidence to suggest that the whole business was designed to be temporary from the first. "This is not an attempt to restore the capitalist class," the *Red Gazette* of Petrograd noted in December 1921, "but to adapt it to our constructive work."

Then as now there was bitter controversy in the party about the reforms. But to conceive the NEP as a temporary compromise, a temporary alliance with the doomed capitalists, was altogether characteristic of Lenin, who after all was preaching in 1920 that the "strictest loyalty to the ideas of Communism must be combined with the ability to make all the necessary practical compromises, to 'tack,' to make agreements, zigzags, retreats, and so on." Indeed, he wrote, "the entire history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is full of instances of changes of tack, conciliatory tactics, and compromises with other parties, including bourgeois parties!" (This may be precisely what Gorbachev means in *Perestroika* by Lenin's inspiration, his "lofty moral strength.") As for the foreign capitalists, "They are a foreign thing in our system," said Lenin, ". . . but whoever wants to learn must pay." "Afterward," he noted, "we shall get it back with interest."

Just as the Soviet economy has stood in a parasitic relation to the West, so the Communist-party apparatus has stood in an essentially parasitic relationship to Soviet society as a whole; and herein may lie the link between domestic and foreign-poicy reforms. The situation of the USSR today can be likened to that of a man whose youthful body was invaded by a powerful parasite which took command of his system, injecting poison and drawing off the body's vital energies as it spread its control. At first, under the influence of this parasite, the young man's body actually grew stronger—as people sometimes do from their battle with a terrible, debilitating disease. Thus it was during the Civil War and later the Stakhanovite period under Stalin, when through forced collectivization, forced industrialization, and a thousand other horrible expedients—plus a good deal of Western help—the Communist party dragged feudal Russia by the scruff of the neck into the modern world. The same basic pattern of strength rising out of tribulation persisted during World War II.

Over time, however, this body has simply worn down. It has aged. The poisoning of the parasite and the drawing off of vital energies have become too much for it. As of now, it can barely engage in productive labor, let alone take on new exertions or challenges. This social debilitation is occurring, moreover, at a moment when other nations of the world—led by the sustained U.S.

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recovery of the 1980's—are undergoing rapid growth and blindingly rapid technological transformation.

What is dying, in short, is not so much Communism as the host organism. For seventy years, the Communist parasite has depended upon the body of socialist society for nourishment and to exert its will in the world. Now, to borrow a phrase from W.B. Yeats, it is "fastened to a dying animal." If this animal dies, then it dies.

Consequently, the parasite needs to do two things: to let up on the body, to give it some rest, some fresh air, some respite from the constant poisoning and drawing-off of energy, and, perhaps more crucially, to obtain for it transfusions of vital energy—in the form of capital and technology from the West. There is also an effort to pare down the party itself, to return to the smaller, more dedicated cadres of Lenin's era.

But anyone who thinks that changes like those under the New Economic Policy or under the present *perestroika* mean the end of this party elite is underestimating the coercive power, both external and internal, which the party apparatus maintains at its disposal—and the degree to which the party has historically depended on creating the illusion of hopeful change.

Still, whatever may be the truth about Soviet domestic policy, it is Soviet foreign policy that should directly concern us. The attack on NATO is by no means the only discordant note sounded by Gorbachev. Thus, despite Soviet protestations to the contrary, a recent White House statement indicated that Soviet military deliveries to Nicaragua have continued. Communist insurgent activity in El Salvador has been on the increase. (Western admirers of Gorbachev blame Castro for this, but the fact is that Castro depends critically on economic and military assistance from the Soviet Union to execute such maneuvers.) Every time the brutal Mengistu regime in Ethiopia suffers a defeat at the hands of the Eritrean rebels, Moscow, even in this period of acute economic hardship, somehow manages to send a fresh supply of tanks. And long after its demise was predicted by Western prognosticators, the Soviet-sponsored Afghan government remains in control, sustained by massive shipments of arms from Gorbachev's Soviet Union. In the meantime, Soviet statements public and private continually promise cuts in military production, but the evidence indicates that the cuts have yet to occur. What is perhaps more important is that even with significant reductions in defense spending, the Soviet Union, according to a recent Pentagon analysis, will be outproducing the U.S. through the 1990's.

Moreover, the dual-track methods of Soviet policy, evident since the time of Lenin, appear to survive. While promoting good relations at the state-to-state level, the Soviet Union continues to spread lies about the United States through its active-measures network—including, most recently, the story, originally printed in *Pravda* in 1987 and assiduously circulated in Latin America during 1988, that Americans are buying Latin American babies so as to use their parts for transplants. And as already noted, Soviet illegal operations to obtain Western technology and efforts to recruit new Soviet agents have actually increased. In other words, while Gorbachev is shaking our hand, he also appears to be picking our pocket.

PERHAPS all this is unnecessarily gloomy. Perhaps democracy really is the wave of the future, even in the Soviet Union. Yet some of the same voices who predict this outcome also predicted not long ago that the Chinese Communist regime would find itself helpless before masses of smiling students in Tiananmen Square. Nor is the present the first time that the West has yielded to the vision of a new Soviet Union and a new world. When in the spring of 1955 the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and Bulganin took the unprecedented step of concluding the Austrian State Treaty and withdrawing its armies of occupation from Austria, even the skeptical U.S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, was inclined to believe for a time that the West might actually be beginning to win the cold war. Yet the period 1957 to 1962 proved to be the most dangerous of the postwar era. Two major crises over Berlin sent shudders through Europe, and a climactic crisis over missiles in Cuba seemed to bring the world to the brink of nuclear war.

All of this suggests why the world "beyond containment," to use the phrase President Bush has recently begun to employ, is unlikely to be a safer world. Even if the Soviet Union were a more benign power than it is—a state, say, like Imperial Japan in the 1920's or Weimar Germany—the disassembly of the containment system would carry risks and create ambiguities likely to lead to conflict. But given the peculiar centrality of deception and subterfuge to Soviet policy, the historical ruthlessness of the Communist elite, and the parasitic relation of this elite to its own society and to the West, the dangers are especially great. As it stands, the loosening of barriers between East and West is unlikely either to weaken the hold of the ruling elite in the Soviet Union or to enhance the stability of the world system. On the contrary, the lessons of the not-so-distant past would suggest that such a change is destined to have the opposite effect. Optimism about this uncertain future could be our undoing.

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Gorbachev's Cultural Revolution

Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr.

WHAT is going on in the Soviet Union? There have been astonishing changes. But in the very same areas we see elements familiar from totalitarian politics as practiced decades ago. The elections this past spring, for example: in some places, there were free contests in which the official candidate lost. But in most places, they were rigged: "leftists were screened out," according to one Soviet commentator, and there were results such as 45,534 for, 430 against—in Armenia! Which of the clashing facts should we use to interpret the phenomenon?

Because we in the West have problems in understanding, we have greater problems in responding. Some people are simply thinking of what we can give away next. Another, firmer position, common in the Bush administration, is that "we are impressed," but as the President recently exhorted Mikhail Gorbachev, "Don't stop now." This sort of view implies, perhaps unintentionally, that Gorbachev is on a slope toward Americanization and that we can slide him farther and farther. Yet because it does not advance an interpretation of what Gorbachev is doing, this perspective at the same time assigns no limits to what he might do, or to what we might do to slide him farther.

Gorbachev is not the kind of politician we are used to praising in the West, a "pragmatist" who tries to solve problems that his environment presents to him. Gorbachev's disposition is not to solve problems but to create problems for others. Rather than submitting to the political setting out of which he emerged, he is trying to shape that environment through an active political strategy.

This strategy has responded to the logic of the process by which one Soviet leader succeeds another, as it has operated over the last sixty years. Professor Myron Rush of Cornell has demonstrated a cyclical pattern in that process. An American President inherits, when he is elected, authority which is usually as great as it will ever be; therefore we speak of a President as enjoying a "honeymoon" at the beginning of his administration. In a Soviet succession from one leader to another there is an opposite movement: first, dispersion of the old General Secretary's power to a "collective leadership," then the gradual recovery of power by a new General Secretary. Thus, a newly-appointed General Secretary normally begins with a Politburo majority working against his taking greater control of the government. Indeed, after four years Gorbachev probably still has a majority against his further consolidation of power.

In order to secure dominance over rival leaders, Stalin, Malenkov, Khrushchev, and Andropov all tried to bring elements of society normally excluded from politics into the political arena. Nikita Khrushchev (as Professor George Breslauer of Berkeley has shown) used the strategy of threatening his colleagues with the eruption of a dissatisfied public if he were not given power. Gorbachev has adopted this same strategy of mobilization on a gigantic scale, with *glasnost* in the press, the freeing of intellectuals and dissidents to voice demands for drastic change, the organization of "popular fronts" and other informal groups outside party control, street demonstrations against the delegates chosen by local officials to the 19th party conference last summer, and now multi-candidate elections. At the April 25 meeting of the Central Committee, Gorbachev virtually admitted what he was doing and that it is aimed at his Politburo colleagues:

> And the main thing, comrades—and this I especially want to single out—is . . . the wide politicization of the masses and the emergence of new millions of people into the arena of social activity. . . . If the first stage of the process went in a way from above, now the process is to a decisive degree characterized by a mighty movement from below. . . .
>
> I ought to tell it straight, comrades, that party organizations, that our cadres in many cases have proved not ready for such a turn. . . . This relates also to the Central Committee of the party and to its Politburo.

THE historical event of which Gorbachev's strategy is most reminiscent, however, is not Khrushchev's accession, but the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in China,

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when Mao Zedong brought the students and workers into the streets against the other members of the Politburo. This, rather than any Western process of gradual reform, is the analogy to start from in understanding the dizzying transformations unfolding in the Soviet Union.

The spring elections were the biggest example of Gorbachev's strategy. Gorbachev does not yet have enough control over the Politburo and Secretariat to determine many local appointments or to dismiss important party leaders who are not his followers, such as Zaikov in Moscow or Shcherbitskii in Kiev. But through somewhat freer elections, with more than one candidate in many districts, forces can be set in motion which will damage these leaders without Gorbachev's direct intervention. A Politburo member who is defeated for the Congress of People's Deputies, as Solovyev was in Leningrad, remains in the Politburo but becomes damaged goods. His power to restrain Gorbachev's consolidation of authority is vastly diminished.

Glasnost, too, is a part of Gorbachev's succession strategy. It has had the effect of discrediting every General Secretary since Lenin, every institutional power center (the apparatus of full-time party employees, the economic ministries, the army, to some extent the KGB), and every alternative leader in the present, *except* Gorbachev. The Moscow Trials of the 30's discredited every living Old Bolshevik leader *except* Stalin. Khrushchev's de-Stalinization accomplished something similar. But Gorbachev is doing this far more radically; the result, as Rush has suggested, is to discredit the system itself.

Discrediting the Soviet past also serves the function of distancing Gorbachev from practical problems and from the need to solve them. The bigger the problems, the more gigantic and noble Gorbachev's task appears in addressing them, and the more time he has. If there is an absence of meat in the stores, it becomes harder and harder to explain after four years of Gorbachev's stewardship why the problem has not been solved. But if the Soviet Union took the wrong course in 1928, it will require decades of upheaval to turn back to the right one. As Gorbachev has said, *perestroika* is a revolution.

Finally, there are the structural changes in party and state institutions that Gorbachev (like earlier Soviet leaders) has engineered. With the convening of the Congress of People's Deputies and the smaller Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev is in the process of creating an essentially new policy-making structure with dubious competence to govern, but clear potential to weaken the party hierarchy that has dominated Soviet politics since the 20's. Like other features of Gorbachev's strategy, the structural changes are shattering old institutions without building up new ones to replace them effectively. The key to the new political system may lie in the election of Gorbachev to the new post of Chairman of the Supreme Soviet. This gives him a power base independent of the Politburo and the party apparatus—"practically boundless power," as Andrei Sakharov has pointed out.

To recognize the degree to which Gorbachev's strategy is Stalinist in form is not to deny that his agenda is Westernizing in content. But without such a strategy Gorbachev would be in the position of an American politician who had some ideas about public policy but no idea of how to become President. A Soviet politician is even more preoccupied with how to gain authority, because while the Soviet system craves strong leadership, no acknowledged point of decision, like an election, confers the right to it. Leadership must be seized.

Gorbachev is obviously very ambitious. Only in a culture as prudish about ambition as modern America could this important factor never be mentioned. It was ambition that drove this smart peasant boy to return from his fancy Moscow education to do party work amid the dreary farms of his native district, and it is ambition that is driving him to transform the Soviet system. Communist politics is always a potential hothouse of huge ambition, because its definition of political leadership comprises not only dictatorial power but the intent to transform nature, reforge consciousness, end the exploitation of man by man.

By the same token, established Communist systems always contain a potential seed of their own destruction: the possibility that the supreme leader will turn out to be the biggest revolutionary. This possibility has been actualized with Mao in one direction and in another with Gorbachev, who has had the imagination and the daring to touch off a revolutionary dynamic that increases dissatisfaction with the present and raises expectations for the future.

GORBACHEV'S political strategy hit the Soviet Union like an earthquake. It encountered a stagnant society where people lived a very hard life. In addition to the endemic shortages, they were subjected to constant scolding by the rulers in the name of an ideology that by the time Gorbachev came along was worn out. But in recent decades the educational and social mobility achieved by the regime had produced a large middle class which was relatively sophisticated. The result was a demoralized populace, with a wide gap between expectations and fulfillment, heavy drinking, a low birth rate, and falling life expectancy. It was a populace filled with latent rage against authority.

This was the context in which Gorbachev began to unleash new political forces. His most drastic departure was the mobilization of intellectuals and journalists. He thereby brought the most anti-Communist element of the Soviet population into the political arena. This allowed him to present himself as a centrist, even though he is a radical;

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but it also activated those who hate the Westernized intellectuals. Thus, Nina Andreeva, in her famous attack on *perestroika* (which may have been edited by Gorbachev's rival Yegor Ligachev), appeals against the intellectuals to the admirers of Stalin and to the anti-Semites, many of whom are also anti-Communists themselves.

In general, the result of the mobilizing factor in Gorbachev's political strategy is that every dissatisfied element is now pouring into politics. The most powerful of these dissatisfied elements, up to this point, are the non-Russian nationalities. Although the upsurge at first took the form of pitting one nationality against another, it has emerged as a different phenomenon from local nationalism in Brittany or South Tyrol or Ulster. It has tended to turn against the Communist regime. This became clear in Azerbaidzhan, where until recently the Politburo in Moscow had taken the Azerbaidzhani side against the Armenians in the dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh, not permitting that province to secede from the Azerbaidzhan republic. Nevertheless, the Russian troops sent to Azerbaidzhan to cope with the demonstrations were regarded as enemies by the people there. When five Russian soldiers were killed by a grenade in Kirovabad, and others hurt, the local hospitals refused to treat the wounded. Similarly, in the official newspaper of Estonia, a minor official has called the red of the Soviet flag, symbol of the regime, "the color of blood and revenge."

With the recent elections, the mobilizing factor in Gorbachev's political strategy has gone far beyond the intelligentsia. The elections showed that the working class is also dissatisfied with the status quo, and that the heretofore apolitical resentment of the entire Soviet public is becoming politicized. Thanks in part to Gorbachev's strategy of discrediting Soviet institutions and leaders, the country is seething.

Moreover, by relaxing controls, Gorbachev has given long-repressed dreams and ambitions—both at home and in Eastern Europe—room to expand in. These soaring hopes coexist with the dissatisfaction due to the economic situation. There is a growing budget deficit, rising wages, no increase in labor productivity, and inflation. Gorbachev has admitted that "shortages are increasing and uneasiness is growing in society." The combination of extensive hopes and bitter dissatisfaction is an explosive one. It was the combination, as Tocqueville notes, that produced the French Revolution.

Gorbachev's cultural revolution is thus near to spinning out of control. In fact, the Soviet Union can no longer be assumed to be a stable country. For even if Gorbachev can consolidate his personal authority, he will come face to face with the disruptive forces he himself has created. In an analogous situation, other Soviet politicians have sometimes executed sudden changes of position, abandoning major elements of their earlier reform programs and adopting quite different policies. The classic instance is Khrushchev's behavior in early 1956. After the death of Stalin, Khrushchev had pursued a political strategy that involved the symbolic reaffirmation of Stalinism. But within a period of a few days, challenged by the forces behind Mikoyan, Khrushchev switched from one extreme of the political spectrum to the opposite, from Stalinism to de-Stalinization.

Of course, Gorbachev has moved into a situation rather different from that of earlier General Secretaries. Because of the particular direction he has taken, he is more constrained by public opinion, and to change as abruptly as Khrushchev did would sacrifice most of his existing support.

Another possible outcome is that Gorbachev will be removed by his colleagues as General Secretary. After the April Central Committee meeting it appeared that the majority of Gorbachev's colleagues were weary of him. One provincial party secretary pointedly said:

> We are obliged to admit that in the years of *perestroika* also many errors and miscalculations were made . . . it is indispensable not only to tell the people the truth but also to name the specific ones guilty of miscalculations.

To what specific person does this most apply?

The promised local elections, if they ever take place, will force serious decisions on Gorbachev's enemies. This time, if they lose, as thirty of them did in the national elections in March, they will probably be ousted. They will therefore be tempted to launch a preemptive strike against Gorbachev. On the other hand, to remove him would be to lose the impetus toward reforming the system and to face the disruptive forces he has unleashed.

WHETHER Gorbachev stays or goes, however, the question for us is whether the changes that have occurred since 1985 are reversible or irreversible.

In the area of foreign policy, the area most important to us, the answer is clear: the "new thinking" in foreign policy is totally reversible. The basic reason is that this "new thinking" has not created any realities that would block a swing away. There are a few exceptions—in Afghanistan, the exit of the Soviet army has decreased total Soviet leverage on the situation. And it is important to note that for a few years, until the economic reforms have either begun succeeding or have obviously failed, the Soviet leadership will have a strong motive not to make its system bear the demands of confrontation with the West.

Nevertheless, to assert that "the cold war is over" is to project our wishes onto a set of conditions that have not yet materialized. For there are serious reasons to suspect that the same oscillations which we have seen since 1917 between "Right" and "Left" tactics, between détente and confrontation, will go on. In the short term, the present "peace

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offensive" has inherent limitations. If it does not actually achieve its ultimate goals of splitting the United States off from Europe, maintaining Soviet military superiority at lower (and hence less expensive) levels, while also producing economic and technological help from the West, Gorbachev's peace offensive will run the risk of giving away too much. There will then be a temptation once again to supplement hopes with threats.

In any case, whether *perestroika* succeeds or fails, it ironically bodes ill for visions of an end to the cold war. If it succeeds, it will restore Soviet power and confidence, and hence Soviet imperial ambition. But if it fails, a recoil from détente will also seem the easiest way to rally the country and overcome the stale taste of defeated dreams. We should not forget the West's experience with Khrushchev, in which the political style of the domestic reformer became the political style that secretly sent nuclear missiles to Cuba. And Gorbachev is a much more reckless man than Khrushchev.

The situation with domestic change is different and more complicated. The biggest single factor in producing the new climate internally is Soviet journalism. But since every story published (or broadcast) still passes through multiple stages of official approval and is printed on scarce state paper by state presses, *glasnost* could disappear like the morning dew. By contrast, the broader phenomena of informal group activities, public involvement in politics, and popular hopes are realities that block any return to the Soviet Union as it was before 1985.

An attempt to put the forces Gorbachev has liberated back in the box would be very hard. At best, such an attempt would create the strongest domestic opposition movement since the White armies were defeated in 1920, and would allow that movement to claim Communist legitimacy. Simply to reverse the domestic changes thus becomes an unattractive option for Gorbachev or any successor to him. The more attractive course would be to capture people's hopes for a different reform agenda. Here it ought to be recalled that anti-Semitism has always been an easy option for Eastern European authoritarian regimes that wish to make a populist appeal.

All in all, it is probably as misleading to argue that "fundamental changes are not likely" on the Soviet domestic scene as it is to say in foreign policy that "the cold war is over."

WHAT seems most likely, if not yet certain, is that, as Zbigniew Brzezinski has argued, we are entering the "terminal crisis" of Communism. With the Soviet elections, the demonstrations in Beijing, and an attempted coup in Ethiopia, the gathering sense of the failure of Communist regimes suddenly seems to have jelled. This does not mean, as commentators suggested when the Chinese students were demonstrating in Tiananmen Square and the government seemed to be yielding, that Communism will just fade away. We are not discussing the end of an administration like that of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines, but of an entire social system, a civilization. The collapse of Communism, if it happens, will be an event like the decline of the Roman empire, or the Manchu state in China, or the Abbasid and Fatimid caliphates, or the empire of the Spanish Bourbons, or the Old Regime in France, or the Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian empires.

From these analogies we can draw three conclusions. First, the decline of such systems takes a long time. Second, their terminal crises are complex and eventful. Episodes of conservative restoration alternate with periods of ever more rapid change and growing outside influence, as the deeply split society tries in vain to find a solution.

The third characteristic of such terminal crises is that they are *dangerous*. The brutal end in Tiananmen Square is only the most recent example. Thus, the collapse of the Old Regime in France led quickly to the conquest of Europe by revolutionary armies. The long decline of Austria-Hungary was marked by civil war; by regional wars in which the decaying power inflicted sharp defeats (Lissa and Custozza in 1866, Caporetto in 1917) on the Piedmontese-Italian state which represented the rising principles of nationalism and liberalism; by the emergence of new ideological solutions (Hitler was a product of Linz and Vienna); and finally by the abrupt decision to check the growing threats to the system's existence, at the last minute, through the ultimatum to Serbia in July 1914. World War I, from which the West has never fully recovered, was set in motion by the decline of Austria-Hungary and of the Ottoman empire.

The terminal crisis of the Soviet system will similarly expose us to great dangers: the USSR still possesses 12,000 strategic-nuclear warheads. But the crisis also offers historic opportunities. Totalitarianism has been the greatest problem man has faced in the 20th century. In World War II we narrowly defeated the then most dangerous variant of totalitarianism, but at the cost of strengthening the other variant. Now the last great bastion of totalitarian politics may be crumbling.

Better yet, the Soviet system is entering its terminal crisis at the same time as the entire world is experiencing a discovery or rediscovery of democracy and entrepreneurial activity. Accordingly, the trends inside and outside the Soviet Union reinforce each other. Inside the Soviet Union the fact that democratization seems to be on the agenda of the contemporary world makes things harder for Leninism. Outside the Soviet Union, *glasnost* has substantially discredited Soviet Communism as a model for changing Third World societies.

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Democracy is emerging as the only coherent and vigorous alternative.

To be sure, Gorbachev's political strategy does not aim at democratization in our sense. But by discrediting the system and weakening the party apparatus, Gorbachev is creating a void that democracy may eventually fill. He has also immensely enlarged what the West has an acknowledged right to demand of the Soviet Union. Not long ago international good manners seemed to require that we proclaim Brezhnev a man who (in the words of Jimmy Carter's Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance) "shares our dreams and aspirations." Now it is Gorbachev who for reasons of his own feels it necessary to proclaim that he does indeed share our beliefs: in free elections, in the individual's right to work for himself and enjoy the fruits of his labor, in self-determination for Eastern Europe. It is Gorbachev who for all practical purposes declares that the Soviet imperial system is a failure.

The upshot is that our efforts to cooperate peacefully in the dismantling of that system need not be controversial to the degree that they once were. Especially in Eastern Europe, the opportunities to expand freedom are enormous.

The other side of our current situation is the ongoing dynamic that the British Sovietologist Leo Labedz has labeled "competitive decadence": Soviet Communism is decaying, but Western resolve may evaporate faster. The Politburo, with tactical brilliance, has realized that the pause enforced by its internal crisis can be exploited in a peace offensive to weaken the West and lighten the pressures exerted by the international trend toward democracy. Lulled, we could well dismantle our military forces and allow NATO to fall apart, thereby renouncing our ability to influence a complex and dangerous transition.

But the will to resist this peace offensive cannot be called forth by mere caution. It can only be inspired by a sense of how high the stakes are. We are probably entering a period as pregnant with possibilities, both frightening and captivating, as the years just after World War II. In those years statesmen such as Dean Acheson and Paul Nitze saw the possibilities of a new diplomatic structure that would contain the dangers and develop the opportunities inherent in the historical situation.

The decades that followed were different, less fluid, offering more threats than opportunities. For most of that time, the qualities needed in us have been primarily those of resistance. Now, it seems, we are entering another period of fluidity, of collapse and rebuilding. If so, the qualities it will ask of us will be not only those of firmness but also—and even more—those of energy and imagination.

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Totalitarianism, Dead and Alive

Stephen Miller

The current, unprecedented wave of reform and unrest in the Communist world has led many Western observers to proclaim the demise of totalitarianism. Thus, commenting in the *Wall Street Journal* on changes taking place in the USSR, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. has written: "*Glasnost*, to put it simply, means the end of Soviet totalitarianism." Analysts who have offered a less upbeat assessment than Schlesinger have nevertheless also concluded that the Soviet Union and several other Communist regimes should no longer be called totalitarian.

Are they right? It is not easy to answer this question because the term "totalitarian" has been used to describe a variety of regimes. The term itself, moreover, is regarded with suspicion by some on the Left who claim that it smacks of the cold war, having been used—they say—to demonize Communist regimes and apologize for right-wing ones. Some of these critics even think the term is more appropriate as a description of the "repressive tolerance" (in Herbert Marcuse's phrase) supposedly characteristic of advanced capitalist societies like the United States.

On one factual point the leftist critics are correct: the word "totalitarian" did come of age in the 1950's, at the height of the cold war, when it was made popular—at least in academic circles—by the work of Hannah Arendt and Carl Friedrich. It had been in use, however, since the 1920's, having been applied by Italian anti-fascists to the regime established by Mussolini. In the 1930's, as later in the 50's, the term was invoked to highlight the difference between "traditional" tyrannies and the new regimes of Hitler and Stalin. These two men were not latter-day Caligulas or Ivan the Terribles; they were something else altogether.

What exactly was that something? It was not simply a matter of numbers of people killed, though the enormity of Hitler's and Stalin's crimes against humanity can hardly be gainsaid. Rather, the enormity of their crimes followed from the enormity of their ambition. Hitler and Stalin did not want to gain total power simply for its own sake; they became tyrants in order to accomplish an extremely ambitious political project—the transformation of their own citizenry and the creation of a new world order. It was this immense ambition that required them vastly to expand the power of the state. Massive terror was necessary to purge real and potential enemies of the new order, and intensive indoctrination was necessary to fashion a new man. The state had to become involved in all aspects of a citizen's life. Both Hitler and Stalin would have agreed with Lenin's dictum that "we recognize nothing private."

To be sure, there were differences between them. Hitler was less interested in transforming people than in "purifying" his nation by destroying the supposedly subhuman races who were corrupting it. For those with the wrong "blood"—primarily Jews, but also Slavs and Gypsies—transformation was not possible; they were either to be used as slave labor or exterminated. And for those with the right "blood," transformation was not necessary; as long as they nominally adhered to Nazi values, they could lead a relatively normal life.

What this means is that there was more private "space" in Hitler's Germany than in Stalin's Soviet Union, at least for those who were not labeled enemies of the Reich. Despite mass rallies and other forms of indoctrination, the atomization that characterized the USSR under Stalin does not seem to have occurred in Germany before the final years of the war. Earlier, even some public grumbling was tolerated. As Maria Vassiltchikov notes in her *Berlin Diaries*, many Germans practiced a kind of "*m'en fichisme* in lieu of open criticism . . . as a kind of self-protection, while dissociating themselves from their country's present rulers and actions. . . ." Vassiltchikov even speaks of someone who was "a well-known anti-Nazi" in 1944, suggesting that one could be an opponent of Hitler's policies without being immediately visited by the Gestapo.

In contrast to Nazism, Marxism-Leninism is a pure ideology of transformation. Lenin, the founding father of totalitarianism, spoke of creating a new Soviet man. As for Stalin, he was perhaps more interested in cowing Soviet man into submission. In this respect Stalin was neither a latter-day Robespierre, bent upon rooting out those less than fully and selflessly devoted to the

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new order, nor a faithful disciple of Lenin, determined to get rid of "class enemies." Stalin exterminated friend and foe alike—sending millions of ardent Communists to the gulag, sometimes for no reason whatsoever. He thus succeeded in creating an atmosphere of total fear and suspicion in which, as Nadezhda Mandelstam puts it in *Hope Against Hope*, "Nobody trusted anyone else, and every acquaintance was a suspected police informer. It sometimes seemed as though the whole country was suffering from persecution mania."

As the sole interpreter of Communist ideology, Stalin could also say when it should be dispensed with. During World War II he virtually abandoned that ideology, opening the churches and appealing to Russians to defend their motherland.

The Communist leader most rigidly bound by the notion of transformation was Mao Zedong. Mao's China, where "thought reform" was taken very seriously, thus more closely approximated the "ideal type" of totalitarian regime than did Hitler's Germany or even Stalin's Russia. All Chinese were supposed to confess to their "work unit" not only "counterrevolutionary actions" but "counterrevolutionary thoughts"—their own as well as those of their wives, children, or parents. If, in the Soviet Union, a person receiving a ten-year sentence for nothing might be puzzled or outraged, in China many apparently accepted these sentences gratefully, feeling that they truly deserved punishment even though they did not know why they had been singled out. Yet even in Mao's China, thought reform meant not so much a transformation as a slavish devotion to Mao himself, who expected everyone to "report" to his photograph every day and apply "Mao Thought" to all aspects of life.

To make so much of Hitler, Stalin, and Mao may seem like belaboring the obvious, yet it is surprising how many students of totalitarianism downplay the role of the leader in order to focus on the role of the state, the party, or the ideology. In what might be called "classic" totalitarian regimes, however, ideology is necessary but not sufficient. What is essential is an omnipotent leader, someone whose interpretation of the ideology is infallible. The only exceptions are those regimes that came to power in Eastern Europe on the back of Soviet troops; there, Stalin, rather than any local leader, remained the cult figure. When Tito broke with the Soviet Union in 1948, he in turn became the man with the last word on all ideological matters.

How does a totalitarian leader achieve and consolidate power? By setting up an apparatus loyal to himself, not to the state. Contrary to what Zbigniew Brzezinski contends in *The Grand Failure*, totalitarianism is not "synonymous with quintessential statism." Hitler's own apparatus was often at loggerheads with the traditional German state establishment, and Stalin's security apparatus continually purged that of the Communist party. Hitler, in fact, was an admirer of Stalin's methods. As he once said: "I bitterly regretted that I did not purge my officers corps the way Stalin did." It was not the German people that the new men around Hitler idolized; it was Hitler himself. Likewise, it was not Marxism-Leninism or the party that the Red Guards were loyal to; it was Mao.

Classic totalitarianism, then, is not the end product of an expanding state power, as some conservative thinkers have argued. The United States could enlarge its state sector enormously and it would still not be a totalitarian nation so long as it lacked the essential ingredients of an ambitious ideological project and an omnipotent leader "above" the state and unconstrained by legal tradition. Under Hitler and Stalin, as the late Leonard Schapiro has written, "it was not the state which increasingly absorbed the society. It was the Leader and the apparatus of control which he created, or which operated under him, which progressively . . . ate their way into the fabric of both state and society." Hitler and Stalin, in fact, came to believe in their own indispensability; in private conversation Hitler said there was no successor worthy of him.

In a real sense, indeed, classic totalitarianism did not survive the death of these leaders. But while they lived, Hitler, Stalin, and Mao were worshipped by millions of true believers. Nadezhda Mandelstam again: "To some degree or another we all, of course, believed what was dinned into us. The young people—whether students, soldiers, writers, or guards—were particularly credulous." Her "of course" is chilling, for it implies that indoctrination inevitably works.

Yet Mrs. Mandelstam also suggests that the primary force animating Soviet citizens was not love of Stalin or belief in Marxism-Leninism but fear of the NKVD—Stalin's secret police. We shall never know what percentage of Germans were ardent Nazis, but it may be that many only appeared so, for fear of what might otherwise befall them. Indeed, according to Primo Levi, "Never has some form of reaction, a corrective of the total tyranny, been lacking, not even in the Third Reich or Stalin's Soviet Union. . . ." And Mrs. Mandelstam, notwithstanding her remarks about indoctrination, agrees: "In periods of violence and terror people retreat into themselves and hide their feelings, but their feelings are ineradicable and cannot be destroyed by any amount of indoctrination."

So classic totalitarianism has always failed to gain the kind of total control over society it aims for, transforming a citizenry into a mass of fanatical ideologues or atomized paranoids. But we should also keep in mind that such regimes do not *need* the active support of a majority in order to wreak their murderous will, which has caused human devastation on a level undreamed of by

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even the most tyrannical monarchs of old. Hitler ruled Germany for twelve years, ending only with his military defeat; Stalin ruled the Soviet Union for approximately twenty-four years, ending with his death; similarly with Mao's almost thirty-year grip over China and Enver Hoxha's forty-year rule in Albania. Pol Pot of Cambodia, a mass murderer on a par with Hitler and Stalin, still remains on the scene, hoping to regain power. No classic totalitarian regime has ever been successfully challenged from within.

II

The regime that replaced Hitler was not, of course, totalitarian. What about those which replaced Stalin and Mao, and what about the other post-Stalinist regimes of Eastern Europe?

In none of these places, is there a leader who inspires fanatical devotion—a leader who is infallible with regard to the ideology. Moreover, people are no longer arrested for nothing at all, and rarely are they arrested for being a member of the "wrong" class. By and large, in these regimes there is a tacit bargain between the state and the people. As the Czech playwright and dissident Václav Havel once summed up the regime's point of view: "Think what you like in private, as long as you agree in public . . . and the doors will be wide open to you." Or in the words of the Hungarian leader János Kádár in the early 1960's: "Those who are not against us are with us."

Nevertheless, despite the obvious differences between Stalinist and post-Stalinist regimes, many East European dissidents have continued to use the word totalitarian (or, in Havel's case, "post-totalitarian") to describe the latter. A better term might be "normalized" totalitarianism, suggesting something clearly less nightmarish than classic totalitarianism but still pervaded by ideological infection. According to Havel, ideology "creates a bridge of excuses between the system and the individual. . . ." Whether or not anyone believes in this ideology is beside the point; it is the only tolerated public language. Anyone who dares to depart from it in public risks a jail sentence or, more likely, the loss of a job or an apartment—and his children may be prevented from getting a higher education.

Such normalized totalitarian regimes may seem benign to the tourist, but they take a tremendous toll on the lives of the citizenry, who become mired in self-contempt because of the lies they have to tell in order to protect themselves and their family. People, Havel writes, suffer from "the feeling of displaced cowardice [which] . . . settles and accumulates somewhere on the bottom of our social consciousness, quietly fermenting." These regimes do not produce a new man—no one takes the rhetoric of transformation seriously—but they often result in a warped man, frustrated, apathetic, and cynical. Though such men pay little attention to public life, preferring mainly to tell jokes about the leadership in private, the most intimate aspects of their existence are nevertheless poisoned by the official lies. In *1984*, George Orwell suggested that sexual love was the one realm of freedom that could not be conquered by totalitarianism, but the novels of the Czech writer Milan Kundera suggest otherwise: in private life one is animated by the thirst to avenge the humiliations endured in the public arena.

Normalized totalitarian regimes can exist for a relatively long time, but eventually they run into trouble—as in Hungary, a country which for a decade seemed to be quite successful. Investment decisions made on political rather than economic grounds result in a profoundly stagnant economy, heavily indebted to the West for funds borrowed to keep afloat a large number of subsidized industries that cannot compete on the world market. Though even party officials may recognize the need for radical reform, they inevitably lack the political will. Some reforms may be instituted, but these are half-hearted measures that drive up prices for staples and increase unemployment without improving productivity. The economic squeeze is especially hard on the working class—which the regime depends upon for support—and this class becomes increasingly willing to go on strike.

At the same time, the professional classes, who have become well-informed about developments in the West (mainly by listening to foreign radio broadcasts), become less willing to tolerate either the lies of public discourse or the difficulties of professional life in a country with a decaying infrastructure, a poor communications system, and an inadequate technological base. Some emigrate, as has been the case with many Polish professionals; many begin to speak out and even to form independent groups. In short, there come into being the beginnings of a civil society.

At this point the regime must respond. In some cases, reformers within the party gain the upper hand, often by arguing that major changes are necessary in order to maintain power. In others, old-line "conservatives" retain power by warning against the eventual loss of party control if the reformers have their way. Even in the latter case, however, leaders may offer a token bow in the direction of reform. And in any event, whether the regime is dominated by hard-liners or reformers is probably less important than the fact that the façade of party unity, always an essential element in totalitarian rule, has begun to crumble.

In China, for example, the party had gone quite far in liberalizing the economic sphere while at the same time keeping the political sphere under tight control. It was as if the party were saying to the people: act on your own and think for yourself, but ask no questions and humbly accept the dictates of the party, which knows best. For the average Chinese, it appears, these admonitions

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were hypocritical as well as contradictory, not least because many high-level party officials were using their connections to make favorable deals for themselves and their families in the private sector. For many, the notion that the party knew best meant only that the party knew best how to take care of itself.

As was inevitable, some party members in China became reformers—recognizing that a Gorbachev-type loosening of the political sphere was necessary, if only as a safety valve. The student leaders themselves were at first essentially reformist, and their demands were quite modest. Like Western China-watchers, they wanted to help the reformers, and they also thought that the hard-liners would not dare jeopardize China's remarkable record of economic growth. The students were wrong; it now appears the hard-liners were gaining the upper hand even before the pro-democracy movement began. In crushing that movement, they have reinstituted some of the most barbaric practices of Stalinism and Maoism.

Still, even in China it remains likely that the leadership will eventually return to a more normalized form of totalitarian rule. Which is why the dichotomy between hard-liners and reformers so dear to Western experts is misleading. The pressure of events can turn individual Communist leaders from one to the other and back again. Deng Xiaoping was once a hard-liner, then a reformer; he is now a hard-liner, but if he lives, he may well be a reformer again. What has remained constant in China is that hard-liners have always won out whenever the regime has seemed directly threatened with the loss of power.

III

China aside, however, is it possible that in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Hungary reform has gone so far that the hard-liners *cannot* come back to power—that we are seeing a fundamental change in these regimes that makes it inappropriate any longer to call them totalitarian?

In these three countries, public discourse is no longer controlled by the party or limited to the boilerplate of Marxism-Leninism. In all three countries, moreover, public debate has moved beyond social and economic issues to more sensitive political and historical questions. Poland has an independent daily newspaper and a formally recognized opposition party; according to Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron, two leading members of Solidarity, totalitarianism no longer exists in Poland. In Hungary, as was seen most dramatically in the recent reinterment ceremonies for Imre Nagy, not only do party members and the official press harshly criticize Marxism-Leninism, but there are several fledgling opposition parties as well as an increasing number of independent groups. In many respects, the Soviet Union has not gone nearly as far as Hungary or Poland in the direction of fundamental reform—to call for a multiparty system is not acceptable there, and Lenin cannot be attacked directly—but a wide range of formerly taboo subjects is discussed in the official press as well as in the Congress of People's Deputies, where recently a delegate strongly criticized the KGB.

If these regimes no longer are totalitarian, what then should we call them? Many observers say that they are not essentially different from (right-wing) authoritarian regimes, but to use that term is to obscure a fundamental distinction. Although, like authoritarian regimes, post-totalitarian Communist regimes rule in the name of order and responsible progress, they differ in one obvious but crucial respect: they are run not by a military junta but by a Communist party. This is true even in Poland, where a general is the leader.

Military leaders can pave the way for democracy fairly easily—simply by calling for a free election and promising to abide by its results and return to their barracks, that is, to their normal function. But if a ruling Communist party were to make such a promise, it would risk becoming completely superfluous—or at best becoming a minor opposition party. In short, once it relinquishes power a Communist party has a lot more to lose—including the army, the secret police, and the *nomenklatura*.

Authoritarian regimes, as we know, can be very repressive—much more violently repressive than normalized totalitarian regimes—but they are also, as Jean-François Revel has put it, "biodegradable." It is not surprising, then, that several authoritarian regimes in recent times have called for *and held* completely free elections, while so far not a single Communist regime has done so.

This may help explain why the chief characteristic of post-totalitarian regimes is stalemate: an irresistible force (the expanding civil society) facing an immovable object (the party). As Timothy Garton Ash has pointed out, the party "is not like any Western government: it is both stronger (with the whole extensive apparatus of the party-police-military-nationalized industry-state) and weaker (no legitimacy, deeply divided)." As the expanding civil society becomes more vocal in its opposition, the party may acknowledge that its policies have resulted in economic disaster and may strongly criticize Stalinist (or Maoist) forms of socialism, but it also remains stubbornly in power, continually promising more reforms that will "renew socialism." Yugoslavia is a good example of a country that has not been totalitarian for many years but where the party remains in control.

How long can the stalemate last? In early June the Polish regime was repudiated in an election that it had designed with built-in safeguards to prevent the Communist party from being humiliated. Although on the one hand the party seemed to acknowledge its overwhelming defeat, on the

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other hand a number of important party spokesmen belittled the election results. One warned vaguely of a sinister force he called "triumphalism," while a second chided the Poles for voting out of emotion, not reason, and went on to say that he did not believe the results reflected "the real collective will of society." An editorial in the party newspaper stated that "a party or coalition could not, cannot lose, if under its influence reforms were begun. . . ." We are in the world of Alice-in-Wonderland, where things are not what they seem.

Hungary appears further along the path to democracy, since even leading party members there have characterized the Communist era as a form of Oriental despotism. In addition, some have said, unprecedentedly, that the party would abide by the results of free elections—scheduled for mid-1990. But others have asserted that Hungary must remain "socialist"—that is, ruled by the party—for many years to come. As a senior aide to party leader Karoly Grosz told the New York *Times* in mid-May: "This part of Europe became part of the socialist world. We can change this, but not today. Perhaps not even tomorrow. This is a reality." In Hungary we seem to be hearing: "The party is dead. Long live the party."

Similarly mixed signals emanate from the Soviet Union. In June, at the Congress of People's Deputies, many aspects of party rule were strongly criticized; yet during the same congress, according to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*, "almost all the deputies trooped out of the Kremlin Palace to Lenin's tomb . . . [where] they watched two goose-stepping guards in full-dress uniform lay a huge wreath by the mausoleum and then, led by Mr. Gorbachev, solemnly filed past the embalmed body of Vladimir Lenin. . . ." Moreover, despite the variety of opinions expressed at the congress, Gorbachev remains firmly committed to one-party rule, saying only that he will tolerate "a pluralism of different opinions."

IV

However we interpret the ambiguous situations in Poland, Hungary, and the USSR, we should bear in mind that totalitarianism both of the classic and the normalized varieties is alive and well in many countries—thanks in large part to Soviet support. Though much has been made of "new thinking" in the Kremlin, that "hollow shell of a totalitarian regime," as Michael Walzer described the USSR a few years ago, has helped to put in power and to keep in power classic totalitarian regimes in Rumania, North Korea, Cuba, and Ethiopia, and normalized totalitarian regimes in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, South Yemen, Angola, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Nicaragua. The Soviet Union also still supplies massive logistical support to the Communist regime in Afghanistan.

Reports of the death of totalitarianism, then, have been greatly exaggerated. In the West it has been argued that the recent brutal suppression in China was the work of old men who are "out of touch." But it may be the Western experts who are out of touch, always assuming that a Communist spring cannot be followed by a Communist winter. History, as T.S. Eliot wrote, "has many cunning corridors," and we cannot yet confidently know whether reform in Eastern Europe and the USSR has gone so far that it cannot go back. Even if—a big if—Poland and Hungary manage to wriggle free of party control in the near future, many other countries will remain in the grip of totalitarianism for years to come. And who knows what countries may yet succumb: Peru? the Philippines?

Some American observers have seized upon the changes taking place in the Communist world as proof positive of the foolishness of those cold warriors who are still presumably wedded to the concept "of an incorrigible, immutable, Soviet system." But in fact no one has ever argued that totalitarian regimes are immutable, only that they are much more resistant to fundamental change than any other kind of political order. The recent events in China confirm the soundness of this view.

Real change in Communist countries is likely to take a long time. As for what the West can or cannot do in these circumstances, all one can say with certainty is that nothing is more likely to prolong the process of change than to operate under the assumption that the cold war is over. It was, after all, the West's policy of containment that contributed significantly to moving the Soviet Union in the direction of post-totalitarian Communism.

Finally, it has been said that, Soviet Union or no, the totalitarian temptation will always be with us, because it answers a need on the part of many people to "escape from freedom" and relegate their lives and futures to a charismatic leader. Certainly the 20th century has had its frightening share of hero worship—from the fanatical supporters of Hitler to the fanatical supporters of Mao and Pol Pot. But we should remember that no party with a totalitarian agenda has ever won a majority of the popular vote. Totalitarian parties gain power by means of ruthlessness, intimidation, and disinformation. And they keep power the same way.

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Educated by Novels

Joseph Epstein

On more than one occasion in recent years, usually in conversation with quite intelligent people who report to me that they have stopped reading fiction, I have found myself claiming to have been educated by novels. An interesting phrase; but what does it actually mean? Were I to tot up all the books I have read in thirty or so years as an adult, novels might or might not outnumber other kinds—history, philosophy, social science, belles-lettres, but, more than those others taken together, novels, I feel, have been the most decisive in forming my character. They have been decisive in giving me a method or style of thinking, a general point of view, and a goodly portion of such understanding as I may have of the world.

I want to get at how this has come about, but first I should note that novelists have themselves been among the first to warn that reading too much fiction can be a dangerous thing. Don Quixote, Cervantes's poor noodle of a knight with the doleful countenance, is driven nearly mad by the fantastical novels he reads. In more than one of her books, Jane Austen's characters have their views distorted, and hence their good sense thwarted, by reading too many of the wrong sort of novel, and reading them indiscriminately. As for Emma Bovary—"Don't esk!" as Molly Goldberg used to say; Flaubert makes it plain that her ruination is owing in good part to too rich a diet of romantic fiction. Irving Kristol, who so far as I know has written no fiction, is reputed to have counseled young business students never to bring a novel to a job interview, lest they be taken as somehow distracted and dreamy. Sounds like good advice.

At the same time, some of the most interesting non-literary minds I know, and know about, are, and have been, passionate readers of novels. Justice Holmes read Conrad, Hardy, Henry James, and the other serious novelists of his day. (William James, Holmes's contemporary, had a hard go with the novels of his brother Henry.) Freud, who claimed to have acquired much of what he knew from "the poets"—by which he meant literary artists of all kinds—once wrote to Arthur Schnitzler, the Austrian novelist and playwright who had himself been trained as a physician: "The impression has been borne in on me that you know through intuition—really from a delicate self-observation—everything that I have discovered in other people by laborious work." John Maynard Keynes read novels. In our own day, Edward Shils has read a vast quantity of fiction, 19th-century, modern, and contemporary, and constantly rereads Balzac and Dickens, as one might think every good sociologist ought to do. The anthropologist Clifford Geertz makes it his business to keep up with contemporary fiction.

In the only case I know in any detail, my own, a heightened excitement accompanied the reading of novels from the very beginning. Not that I failed to get worked up by other books. My reading life began in earnest at the University of Chicago, where—in the most sensible of radical curricular reforms—no textbooks were used in the College and few books by living writers were taught, and so the intellectual diet was for the most part champagne and caviar. I can recall the deep pleasure of reading Herodotus, the intellectual provocation set in motion by Thucydides. Plato and Aristotle, both of whom were offered in plentiful supply, gave an unformed mind a good workout; and although I knew I had not the least chance of attaining anything like mastery here, I did come to adore Socrates, as Plato intended. I recall being devastated, at nineteen, by Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, taking every dark word in that gloomy little tome to my youthful heart. I remember, too, the awe I felt upon first reading Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*—awe at the spectacle of a writer handling and shaping ideas and making intellectual connections with such easy virile brilliance.

But novels really set me aflame. "The main question as to a novel," wrote Sydney Smith, "is—did it amuse?" Although such novels as I had read as a child did amuse, else I would not have allowed then to detain me, even when quite young I sensed that something more than amusement was going on. In high school, I went through a brief jag of reading novels with slum settings; among their titles were *The Amboy Dukes, A Stone for Danny*

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Fisher, The Hoods, Knock on Any Door. These were all, I now realize, in the mode of a cut-rate naturalism whose chief message was that no one had much chance of rising above his environment. I lapped them up, not so much for the message (which I probably also swallowed) as for the details of slum and criminal life.

I remember finding these details not only exotic, as they would be to a boy born into the comforts of the middle class, but persuasive and, somehow, useful, though for what I could not with any exactitude say. Nevertheless, bits of these inferior works cling to my memory even today. ("The big boat pulled into the night, and Cockeyed Hymie thrilled to the sensation of the clutch.") If writers with names like Irving Shulman, Harold Robbins, Harry Grey, and Willard Motley could excite me like this at sixteen, imagine what lay in wait for me down the road at twenty from writers with names like Fielding, Stendhal, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Thomas Mann.

When I first encountered the great novelists, though I was far from being up to them, I nonetheless knew right off that what they wrote contained as high a truth quotient as I was likely to get from any other kind of writing. Philosophy, for which I had no natural bent, seemed to me to come at things at too high, too abstract, a level. Even so brilliant a writer as Plato struck me as ultimately playing a game—a complex and wondrous game, to be sure, played in splendid style, but in the end still a game. I had been born into a family where common sense was too greatly esteemed ever to take seriously any sort of schematic thinking. Thus the small portion of Marx offered at the University of Chicago was sufficient for me to understand only how other people could fall for it. Like many another student who read Freud too young, I was briefly taken with Freudian doctrine, until I tested it against my own sense of the world and my own sense of humor ("They were a tense and peculiar family, the Oedipuses, weren't they?," Max Beerbohm once remarked) and found it wanting. I liked the exultation of poetry practiced on the highest plane, but I never for a minute felt I could live for long on that plane, where the air was so pure and thin. Perhaps I am speaking to no more than my temperamental and intellectual limitations, but the novel, I early felt, was the most fruitful form, literary or otherwise, going.

I read a great many novels at the University of Chicago, most on my own but some for the classroom, though I had no gifted teachers in this area. One, a nervous and highly irritable young assistant professor, had us read a survey of works from *The Princess of Cleves* to *Ulysses* and including novels by Dostoevsky, Stendhal, Proust, and Thomas Mann. A more distinguished man, Morton Dauwen Zabel, who had been an editor of *Poetry* and was a friend of Edmund Wilson's, taught a course in the modern novel that introduced me to such writers as Ford Madox Ford, E.M. Forster, and Evelyn Waugh, but that otherwise, despite the impress left by Zabel as a cultivated man of letters, was not memorable.

I have since become a teacher myself, and one who frequently teaches courses built around novels, and I must say that I do not think of myself as doing much better than my own early teachers. I tend not to teach those abstruse or arcane books that permit a teacher to step proudly to the lectern and act as a guide to the perplexed. Instead I attempt to show how a given novel works, what moral issues and questions it raises, what is the particular quality of its artistry, and, finally, what its author thinks about the world. If one can do that much with clarity and force, I think one has done pretty well. Yet even when I have done this much, I always feel that I have left out a great deal that is important to the pleasure and point of the work. One can teach a poem so that every word, semicolon, and blank space is exhaustively accounted for, but, somehow, after having taught a novel one generally feels that many of the best parts have been left on the pedagogical equivalent of the cutting-room floor. Or I at least tend to feel this way.

There are of course ideas embedded in novels and there are, as a subdivision of the form, those books called "novels of ideas." But when you have extracted or identified the ideas, I am not sure that you have a whole lot to show. If you determine that Proust in *Remembrance of Things Past* was operating with Bergsonian concepts of time, or that in *The Magic Mountain* Mann was able skillfully to represent the maelstrom of European political ideas of the day, what, really, have you determined? Perhaps that you would have done better to read Bergson directly, or that, having read Mann, you ought now to move on to a sound intellectual history of Europe between the wars. Which is a roundabout way of saying that, while novelists may have a plenitude of ideas, it is rarely their ideas that are the most interesting thing about them.

Or consider the case of Theodore Dreiser, who I happen to believe is the greatest American novelist. Dreiser's ideas, at any rate those that ruled his life outside his novels, are generally appalling in their coarseness. A convert to Communism who found himself sympathetic to Hitler, he may have been the only man in America made happy by the Nazi-Soviet pact; he was an anti-Semite; he was a worshipper of power; he was a rather crude Social-Darwinist—ideationally, Dreiser was a mess. Yet within his novels, these and other ideas function, if at all, more on the level of notions, and they have little to do with Dreiser's very real power as a novelist. I am not altogether sure what does. On the occasions when I have taught a

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Dreiser novel to undergraduates, I have often wanted to begin by saying, "Look here, this guy Dreiser was homely and horny and born into a household where superstitious religion and shame ruled, all of which helped to render him into a writer who probably knew more about desire than any man who ever lived. So with that in mind, go home and reread this novel."

One day, in an essay by Desmond MacCarthy, I came across the following sentence: "It is the business of literature to turn facts into ideas." Exactly and just so, I thought, and handsomely formulated into the bargain. To turn the fact of Desmond MacCarthy's aphoristic sentence into an idea, he is saying that the method of literature, if method it has, is induction, reasoning that runs from the part to the whole, the particular to the general. Other branches of learning have claimed to operate inductively—science, social science—but there are grounds for thinking they do not, that in fact they are testing, hopefully, hunches. But novelists, unless they are corrrupted by their own politics or pet views, are not out to prove anything. They tell their stories, and if they tell them truly and well, honestly and persuasively, somehow things will (as we used to say around the English department) "resonate" into something more general and larger, and all those little frogs of fact that novelists concern themselves with will turn into princes of ideas—which, as MacCarthy says, is the business of literature.

WHY, it might be asked, does literature have to have a business at all? Is it not sufficient that it give pleasure, convey information, widen experience, provide flashes of insight? One reads the world's finest novels, plays, poems, and in time one becomes a more cultivated person, which means somehow more refined, subtler, deeper, even—though this might be pushing it—better. You are what you read; and culture, like heredity and third-class paint, rubs off. I could go on with this catechism of once-hallowed assumptions, although at this point I feel the need to show slides or at least roll out a pumped-up quotation from Ralph Waldo Emerson. All these things may be true—with slight qualifications, I believe them—but they nowadays have an empty ring. As perhaps never before, the study of literature is being asked to justify itself, and thus far it has not done so very convincingly.

I know that I have felt the need for a justification of literary study, beyond the standard one of self-cultivation that is at the core of the liberal arts. As I stand there pointing out the intricacies of a novel by Joseph Conrad in a classroom that features a boy with a dangling earring and a girl in a spiky punk haircut, it occurs to me to ask what it is, exactly, that I am doing. Meanwhile, in a room down the hall, a colleague is giving a course in Third World writers much of which, I assume, is devoted to attacks on the West and especially the United States. Upstairs, other teachers are using literature to push their own particular lines: feminism, deconstruction, and the rest of it. Against the crude juggernaut of politicized teaching, which appears to have affected literature departments almost more than any others in the contemporary university, one wonders how effective traditional teaching, with its emphasis on the moral and aesthetic elements in literature, can continue to be.

The critic Robert Alter has, I suspect, felt doubts similar to my own, or so I judge by the appearance of his new book, *The Pleasures of Reading*,* with its significant subtitle, "Thinking about Literature in an Ideological Age." Alter is now a senior professor at the University of California at Berkeley, where he teaches Hebrew and comparative literature. I mention especially the latter because, in today's university, departments of comparative literature, once the preserve of the multilingual and the erudite, have tended increasingly to become headquarters of academics priding themselves on what is now known as literary theory, or, as they call it in the trade, plain "theory." Theory in current literary studies usually means batting around the dependably less than lucid writings of Lacan and Derrida (*les frères Jacques*, as John Simon once called them), Michel Foucault and Roland Barthes, or some other Frenchman of the month. As for literary Marxists and feminists, they get on happily enough with the theorists, and together they form a jolly daisy chain of "isms." To all this, Robert Alter offers a happy exception.

Although "theory" has been in business for more than a decade now, modern literature theorists, so far as I know, have produced little in the way of brilliant books or essays. But then they tend to write exclusively for one another; and everything they turn out might as well be marked "to the trade only." As Alter notes in his introductory chapter, entitled "The Disappearance of Reading," the theory crowd does not much go in for reading actual literature; he states his suspicion that "many young people now earning undergraduate degrees in English or French at our most prestigious institutions have read two or three pages of Lacan, Derrida, Foucault, and Kristeva for every page of George Eliot or Stendhal."

Early in *The Pleasures of Reading*, Alter notes that, though his book is in part a response to the peculiarities of the new literary theory, "it is meant to be a good deal more than a polemic, for I am convinced that there are more interesting and more important things for a critic to do than merely expose fashionable absurdities." One understands Alter's unwillingness to stride into the Big Muddy of literary theory, though the element

* Simon & Schuster, 250 pp., $18.95.

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of his book that *is* polemical in intent does, it must be said, suffer as a result. But mainly what Alter chooses to do is to put on display the traditional modes of literary study, among them the investigations of character, style, allusion, structure, perspective, and interpretation. In so doing Alter, a man now in his middle fifties, shows still the enduring marks of having once been a student at Columbia (and subsequently at Harvard) at a time when Columbia was the gem of American English departments. Lionel Trilling, F.W. Dupee, Richard Chase, Andrew Chiappe, and others taught at Columbia then, and along with imparting a good grounding in literary study, they passed along a metropolitan spirit that for the vast most part seems absent from academic life today and especially from the crabbed style of contemporary literary academics.

Robert Alter has retained much of the Columbia spirit in the best sense. Certainly it has always pervaded his criticism in COMMENTARY and elsewhere. If *The Pleasures of Reading* suffers more than seems to me absolutely necessary from a certain academic stuffiness or touches of classroom condescension, this does not detract from the fact that Alter's main points in *The Pleasures of Reading* are not academic but real ones. First among these is his insistence that "without some form of passionate engagement in literary reading, the whole enterprise of teaching and writing about literature becomes pointless"—and so, for that matter, does literature itself. Second is "that the language of literature is distinct from the use of language elsewhere in its resources and in its possibilities of expression," and that the investigation of how language is used in literature is not merely a game—however much it can be, as Alter says, "high fun"—but in various ways an aid to understanding the world.

These points may seem a bit obvious to anyone not in a university, but it needs to be reiterated that, within universities, ours is one of those times when, as Orwell once remarked, it is the duty of an intelligent man to repeat the obvious. For today the ascendant views in literary education hold that the language of literature is chiefly self-reflexive, that literature itself is either a game or a swindle, and that the best literary criticism is politics by other means, when it is not another technique for demonstrating that reality does not exist. By reiterating the older and greater truth about literature, and by demonstrating its enduring power through a series of highly intelligent readings of individual works, Alter's book reminds us why we were attracted to literary study in the first place.

WAYNE C. BOOTH, a professor of English at the University of Chicago, is not one of those professors out to prove that reality does not exist. In *The Company We Keep** he proposes, as his subtitle advertises, "An Ethics of Fiction," and he does so precisely in order to allow reality to obtrude on the reading and study of novels. Booth wishes to investigate the "ethical quality of the experience of narrative in itself," as well as the ethical consequences of various novels and the positions their authors take through the representations in their work. It is a large subject, and he has written a large book about it.

The Company We Keep, unfortunately, is also a vastly bloated book. Booth has the academic author's disease in extreme form. His idea of a chapter is to begin with five or six epigraphs, to include twenty or thirty discursive footnotes—he writes, incidentally, some of the best vanity notes in the business, directing us to other things he has written or is planning to write on connected subjects—and then to close with a bibliography often containing more than a hundred items. His is also one of those muddle-making books in which the author promises in Chapter 2 to discuss a related point in Chapter 11, while in Chapter 13 the reader is asked to recall a point raised some three hundred pages earlier in Chapter 3. Here, to give a small sample of the reigning tone, is a fairly typical footnote:

> 1. My article comparing the ethics of the "video" arts and the verbal arts (1982) has been read by some as a biased attack on "viewing" as opposed to "reading" and "listening." Not so. At one time I intended to include a revision as a chapter here, since obviously the different ethical effects of entire media are inherently a part of our subject. But on reflection, especially after W.J.T. Mitchell's *Iconology* (1986), I decided that the subject requires another book. Perhaps. Here I can simply assert that the experience of video *as now commercially determined* is in my view a cultural disaster.

To grasp the self-important and obvious spirit of *The Company We Keep* you have to imagine Dwight Macdonald without any of the wit.

In his attempt to delineate the complex ethical transaction between reader and novelist, Booth remarks that "the authors who become our lasting friends are those who offer to teach us, by the sheer activity of considering their gifts, a life larger than any specific doctrine we might accept or reject." This sounds sensible enough; yet in Booth's own practical criticism, it turns out, the "ethical" generally means only that a novel has to pass what is today considered OK liberal thinking in the academy, especially on such matters as gender and race. Thus Booth reports that his estimate of Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* "has diminished steadily on each new encounter, either with the text or in conversations about it, especially with female readers. . . ." The problem, he has come to realize, is with the character "Big

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Nurse," who, he now reports, "too crudely symbolizes not only 'female' domination of what 'should' be a man's world but also all civilized restraints."

My own guess is that Booth originally admired Kesey's far from first-class novel precisely for its general attack on society and on society's system of civilized restraints. He was, in my view, wrong about it then and he is wrong about it now—*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* has always chiefly been a book for a certain kind of teacher to put on his reading list to show students he is on their side. Nevertheless, Booth seems quite pleased with his own splendid flexibility, and adds: "Who can predict what a further reading, at age eighty, will yield?" In Booth's case, I believe *I* can predict what it will yield—namely, a rough congruence with whatever then passes for acceptable academic thinking. Still, the thought of Booth or anyone else reading a Ken Kesey novel at eighty does not go down easily, except perhaps as a peculiarly just punishment for a contemporary literary academic.

But then Wayne C. Booth appears never to have read a book he did not like, or to have encountered a contemporary academic political or literary movement or idea he could not respect and learn from. He is, not to put too fine a point on it, a caring person, and the reason we know this is that he keeps telling us so. But he was not always thus, as he freely admits: as a young man, he recited what he now realizes were sexist passages from Rabelais "aloud to my young wife, as she did the ironing (!)," and he assigned Orwell's *1984* to his students in a spirit of self-congratulation at being "a passionate enemy of McCarthyism whose own life and opinions were in no need of change." Today, however, he is a more open fellow, confiding how he cried during the movie *The Color Purple*, or learned from Edward Said "to feel uneasy with the word [Oriental] even when it is enclosed in quotation marks." If he once excluded the novels of D.H. Lawrence from serious consideration, dismissing Lawrence as "a pretentious little preacher," now—thanks to his notion of thinking of writers as friends—"I even enjoyed talking with [Lawrence] about parenting."

To pause at this notion of authors as friends, is not the gong of self-congratulation struck rather too strongly in Booth's account of the transaction between great novelists and readers like himself?

> To dwell with you is to share the improvements you have managed to make in your "self" by perfecting your narrative world. You lead me to practice ways of living that are more profound, more sensitive, more intense, and in a curious way more fully generous than I am likely to meet anywhere else in the world. You correct my faults, rebuke my insensitivities. You mold me into patterns of longing and fulfillment that make my ordinary dreams seem petty and absurd. You finally show me what life can be, not just to a coterie, a saved and saving remnant looking down on the fools, slobs, and knaves, but to *anyone* who is willing to earn the title of equal and true friend.

This is all very prettily put, and it manages to suggest that Booth's reading of novels has made him a better man by far than Gunga Din. But I am reasonably sure that this is not, in fact, the case. No doubt he has read a great many novels, but I do not think doing so has necessarily turned him into a wise man, else how could he have written so vanity-ridden and swollen a book? I too have read a great many novels, but my guess is that Booth, for one, will not think they have made me wise, else how could I have written the last few paragraphs of this essay?

Booth appears to believe that in reading "ethically" we take the best each novelist has to offer, and that the sum of all this plays in our minds like some grand chorus, ultimately affecting our characters for the better. I prefer the more modest assessment set out by Robert Louis Stevenson in an essay entitled "Books Which Have Influenced Me":

> The most influential books, and the truest in their influence, are works of fiction. They do not pin the reader to a dogma which he must afterward discover to be inexact; they do not teach him a lesson which he must afterward unlearn. They repeat, they rearrange, they clarify the lessons of life; they disengage us from ourselves, they constrain us to the acquaintance of others; and they show us the web of experience, not as we can see it for ourselves, but with a singular change—that monstrous, consuming ego of ours being, for the nonce, struck out.

This is far from the last word on the subject of what novels accomplish for those who read them regularly, but it is an excellent first word. Stevenson, who was a valued friend of Henry James, was, in James's view, one of the few practitioners of their shared craft who thought long and carefully about the assumptions behind the writing and the reading of fiction. Henry James was himself all but obsessed with such matters. For James, fiction was an authentic and, for him, the only real way of knowing. While he wrote yards and yards on the art of fiction—his own and that of his fellow novelists—no one ever formulated the essence of James's criticism and fiction better than T.S. Eliot, who, in a single jaunty sentence, wrote: "He had a mind so fine no idea could violate it." That splendid dictum would not have been misplaced on Henry James's tombstone.

Yet what does it mean? We can take it on faith that it does not mean that James could not comprehend ideas. Eliot refers to James's "mastery

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over, his baffling escape from, Ideas." I am not sure about the "baffling," but it is clear that to James, who could assuredly bounce the "isms" around with the best of them, the lifelong practice of writing novels had taught him that ideas were not where the important truths lay. There was a truth above ideas, an elusive, difficult to pin down, often inexpressible truth, but it was for James the only truth worth caring about—it was the truth of the novelist.

One does not begin reading novels with this kind of truth in view, any more than, when young, one marries a woman because she seems likely to make an excellent grandmother. When young, one reads novels in large part for information about the world. Much of what I know about the world of East European Jewry—of my own antecedents—I first learned from Sholem Aleichem, I.L. Peretz, Isaac Babel, the brothers Singer. Even not very good novels can supply useful information. I recently read Alison Lurie's *The Truth about Lorin Jones*, which I thought pretty thin stuff, but I did take away from it what seemed to me a persuasive portrait of feminism in present-day Manhattan, the kind of milieu in which one slips in and out of lesbianism as much through the force of the ideas in the atmosphere as through true feeling. The stories of Bobbie Ann Mason fill me in on a world from which I am far removed and which seems to me otherwise undescribed outside fiction: the world of the middle-Southern, unrooted, quasi-educated young who have grown up knowing chiefly the culture of the Pizza Hut, K-Mart, and community college, or what one thinks of as franchise culture. Except in squibs of journalism, generally journalism that prides itself on making use of fictional techniques, one cannot get this kind of news about contemporary American life anywhere outside fiction.

But news of this kind, very good to have for those of us who fancy ourselves students of our own and other societies, is only a charming if not necessarily valuable dividend that fiction pays out to its readers—and not, in my view, the principal reason for reading it. There are also the pleasures of plot, regrettably abandoned in much ostensibly serious fiction by writers more interested in working out their obsessions, intellectual conceptions, and relentless virtuosity, but pleasures that many serious readers return to 19th-century novels to recapture. Then, too, novels, along with history and biography, provide a fine laboratory in which to study character and thus attempt to make some small progress in that deepest of all deep subjects, human nature. H.L. Mencken once said that, when all the theorizing was done, it was chiefly a novelist's ability to create interesting characters that gave him any claim to our attention. Does the contemplation of character in fiction come under the rubric of pleasure or instruction? Or is such a bifurcation beside the point in great literature, where instruction is inseparable from pleasure and pleasure from instruction?

In his recent *Sketches from a Life*, a selection of entries from his diaries, George F. Kennan writes that many Americans "have engaged my admiration, along with a considerable number who have engaged the opposite." Then, half-apologetically, he adds that "to depict them individually is the task of the novelist," whereas he himself has gone through life as a "traveler moving through regions where he has no personal acquaintances at all and where he sees, for the most part, only masses of anonymous figures with whom he has no possibility of interacting." Here we come, I believe, to the nub of the matter. The novelist deals in individual cases, and leaves the generalizations to the literary critics, sociologists, psychologists, journalists, and other fellows passing through town.

To create a concept, said Ortega y Gasset, is to leave reality behind—not all of it, to be sure, but often the most interesting part. The world today is perhaps more concept-ridden than it has been at any other time, owing to the spread of rather mediocre higher education and the pervasiveness of the mass media. In contemporary politics, in social science, even in science, there appears to be no life beneath that of the theory, the concept. The study of literature was once an antidote to life lived at the level of theory and concept. Today, in universities, literary study is itself concept-plagued. "The increase of theories and discourse," writes Saul Bellow in *The Dean's December*, is "itself a cause of new strange forms of blindness."

One of the usually unacknowledged but crucial tasks of the novelist, or so it has always seemed to me, is to demonstrate how reality almost always eludes too firmly drawn ideas. "The novel's spirit is the spirit of complexity," Milan Kundera has noted. "The novelist says to the reader: things are not as simple as you think." The novelist does this, when he is working well, by persuasively establishing that life is more surprising, bizarre, complex, and fascinating than any shibboleth, concept, or theory used to explain it. In that most famous of first sentences, Tolstoy began *Anna Karenina* by writing, "All happy families are alike, but every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Forgive my impertinence, but my own literary education leads me to believe that this splendid sentence is probably only half-true. I have learned from novels that every happy family, too, is happy in its own way.

To be educated by novels, then, is to be educated into a strong taste for the sheer variousness of life—Tolstoy himself said that the artist's purpose is "to compel us to love life in all its countless and inexhaustible manifestations"—and at the same time into a counterbalancing distaste for not

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only the easy but all generalization. To be educated by novels is to believe that human actions are best understood through individual cases, and to believe, further, that every individual case is itself immensely complex—for, as Valéry says, "a man is more complicated than his thoughts." "How astonishing reality was!" exclaims a character in Italo Svevo's novel *As a Man Grows Older,* and anyone educated by novels is likely to agree.

If the novel is finally obdurate before the best intellectual efforts to explain life—it is not for nothing that most novelists are anti-Freudians—it does, of course, yield lessons of its own, or at least the best novels do. From Dickens one learns the importance of friendship, loyalty, and kindness; from Conrad, the central truth of every man or woman's solitude in the world; from Willa Cather, the dignity that patient suffering can bring; from Tolstoy, the divinity that the most ordinary moments can possess—kissing a child goodnight, working in a field, greeting a son returned home from war; from James, as he puts it in *The Princess Casamassima,* that "the figures on the chessboard [are] still the passions and jealousies and superstitions and stupidities of man. . . ."

These are neither explanations nor, really, revelations, but then, in the words of Borges, "this imminence of revelation which does not occur is, perhaps, the aesthetic phenomenon." Knowledge of the kind conveyed in novels may not, in any conventional sense, be useful. All that there is to recommend it is that it feels true, which, for someone educated by novels, is all the recommendation required.

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Impeachment by Other Means

Terry Eastland

THE recent conclusion of the trial of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North provides as good an occasion as any to take stock of a remarkable federal law whose influence is increasingly felt in today's Washington. The special-prosecutor law—enacted as Title VI of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978—has been twice amended, in 1983 and 1987, and is scheduled to expire in 1992. Over the years this law has acquired a new name—now it is the "independent-counsel statute"—and last summer the Supreme Court upheld its constitutionality in *Morrison* v. *Olson*. It is popular on Capitol Hill and in the most influential segments of the media, and a betting man would have to wager that some time before the end of 1992 Congress will extend it another five years, if not stitch it permanently into the federal code.

Nonetheless, the experience of the past eleven years, which have witnessed the appointment of more than nine independent counsels and some well-publicized investigations, including the North probe, argues in favor of major reform of the statute, if not its repeal. This experience shows that the great desideratum of post-Watergate Washington—truly independent special prosecutors to investigate administration malfeasance—has been achieved, all right, but at a very high price that was only dimly perceived at the time of Watergate itself.

THE idea of a court-appointed "special prosecutor" (or independent counsel) to investigate criminal allegations involving administration officials first arose in the fall of 1973, in the wake of the firing of Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, who had been appointed, in accordance with the then-prevailing system, not by any court but by the Attorney General. Legislation to this effect was seriously discussed but finally shelved, as the Nixon administration named Leon Jaworski to succeed Cox; Jaworski continued the investigation without White House interference and with apparent success. Nonetheless, a new conventional wisdom insisted that the public could not have confidence in executive-branch investigations of itself, and during the mid-70's Congress considered various proposals designed to authorize the appointment of "independent" prosecutors. This search resulted in the 1978 statute.

In 1979 and 1980, special prosecutors were named to investigate cocaine charges involving two of President Carter's closest aides. Neither investigation led to prosecution, and both probes were widely regarded as ill-advised and unnecessary, even though the law effectively compelled them. Congress thus changed the statute in 1983 to prevent recurrences of such meritless probes, which in this case had cost the taxpayers close to $200,000 and the defendants substantial legal fees, not to mention injury to reputation.

In 1982, then-Labor Secretary Raymond J. Donovan was investigated on corruption charges by an independent counsel but not prosecuted on account of insufficient evidence. In 1984 Jacob Stein was named to inquire into various charges involving then-White House Counselor Edwin Meese III, who was confirmed as Attorney General after Stein found no evidence to prosecute.

In the spring of 1986 Alexia Morrison was picked to investigate Theodore B. Olson, a former Justice Department official, on charges of misleading Congress. It was his constitutional challenge to the statute that the Supreme Court rejected in *Morrison* v. *Olson*, but Morrison in the end concluded against prosecution. Also in 1986, Whitney North Seymour was appointed to investigate illegal lobbying allegations against former Reagan aide Michael K. Deaver, who was eventually convicted of perjury, and in the same year Lawrence Walsh was appointed to investigate the Iran-*contra* affair. In early 1987 James McKay was selected to investigate illegal lobbying charges involving former Reagan aide Lynn Nofziger and the scandal-ridden Wedtech Corporation. Later that year, McKay was asked to probe related matters involving Attorney General Meese. Nofziger was convicted, though his conviction was later overthrown on appeal. Meese, who was not prosecuted, left office in August 1988 shortly after McKay issued an 814-page report. These are the "officially" known cases so far.*

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* There have been at least two others, but it is up to the court that appoints counsels to release information about a particular case, or even acknowledge its existence.

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No one can dispute that in one respect the statute has proved a resounding success. The many investigations carried out under its terms have indeed been "independent," free of real or apparent conflicts of interest. And no doubt the public has perceived the investigations to be independent; there has been no loss of confidence in the integrity of government, at least not on this score.

This is no minor achievement, but it cannot be evaluated without regard to what independence has meant in other respects. For we now know that independent counsels can be unreasonably, even perversely, independent.

Nothing better illustrates this tendency than certain actions by Whitney North Seymour, who investigated Michael Deaver. Seymour drew his own office seal, featuring an eagle with its head turned defiantly in the opposite direction from the one on the Justice Department seal; the point, as he put it, was that his office had "total independence." And it was Seymour who, upon winning Deaver's conviction on perjury, told reporters how much "loose money" there was in Washington, before going out to advertise himself on the college-lecture circuit as someone willing to accept large fees to talk about government ethics.

Seymour has proved the most eccentric of the independent counsels to date; others have been stylistically more sedate. Yet whatever their styles, they have generally regarded themselves as the Lone Rangers of the federal criminal law.

An anecdote is revealing. One of the issues in the litigation over the constitutionality of the statute concerned whether or not, for purposes of his appointment, a counsel was an "inferior officer" of government. Now it so happened that independent counsels *had* to be defined as inferior officers, or else their appointments would have been clearly invalid under the Constitution; and therefore in *Morrison* the Supreme Court, in upholding their constitutionality, so classified them. But to some this definition has seemed merely technical. Thus, Guy Struve, Lawrence Walsh's chief deputy, told the judges of a federal appeals court that in his view an inferior officer did not have to be inferior to anyone, not even the President. Asked by the court just who would have the last word in case of a disagreement over foreign policy and its implications for prosecution, Struve answered that the counsel would.

This is an answer with breathtaking implications for constitutional law, even democracy itself, although the Supreme Court failed to see them. Yet the purpose here is not to reargue the case but to make a psychological observation: Struve's remark shows how independent counsels tend to think of themselves. Struve's boss also demonstrated this tendency in remarks before the American Bar Association in a 1987 speech. There Lawrence Walsh stated that if an investigation finds "probable cause that a crime has been committed, it is the duty of the independent counsel to prosecute." This, however, is not the prevailing or the reasonable standard: according to the prosecution manual of the Justice Department, fundamental fairness requires that an indictment issue only if the prosecutor believes that an unbiased jury would *convict*.

TODAY'S independent counsel—inferior to no one, ready to go it alone in pursuit of alleged crime—has in fact taken unreasonable prosecutorial actions. Consider Alexia Morrison. Upon finding that the subject of her investigation probably had not violated a federal law, she nonetheless sought to expand her jurisdiction in order to see whether he might be implicated in a conspiracy with others—even though she had no evidence of any such conspiracy. It is doubtful that a prosecutor operating under other legal authority would have gone to such lengths.

It is, indeed, the lengths to which independent counsels go in their singleminded pursuit that tends so to increase their expenses. From 1979 through March 31 of this year, bills submitted by independent counsels and paid by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts amounted to over $19 million. This figure undoubtedly understates the actual taxpayer cost, since the contribution of the FBI and other investigative agencies is not included in it, and neither, of course, are the substantial costs borne by the White House and other agencies in responding to independent-counsel inquiries.

Yet the burden on the taxpayer is hardly the most important one. It is also apparent that independent counsels can act in such a way as to damage the traditional, non-prosecutorial interests of the executive branch. Whitney North Seymour, for example, persistently tried to subpoena the Canadian ambassador to the United States; although in the end the district court held that his subpoenas violated diplomatic immunity, a great deal of expensive diplomatic china was broken in the process.

Then there is the matter of civil liberties. Already there have been instances of counsels who have unjustifiably gone too far, at the expense of those they investigate.

In the Olson probe, the applicable statute of limitations was five years, and was scheduled to expire on March 10, 1988. Independent Counsel Morrison, who was investigating Olson for misleading Congress, threatened him with a "sealed, protective indictment" if he did not waive his rights to the expiration of the statute of limitations. Olson agreed, thus enabling Morrison to buy more time, but obviously he had little choice. Had he been indicted, he could not, under the statute, have sought recovery of legal fees, even if he were later acquitted. With Olson's fees running close to a million dollars, Morrison's threat was tantamount to blackmail, made more outra-

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geous by the fact that she not only had no reasonable assurance of winning a conviction but also had no evidence against Olson.

Another action taken by an independent counsel ranks as equally outrageous. Watergate Special Prosecutor Henry Ruth once observed that it is "irresponsible and unethical for a prosecutor to issue a report suggesting criminal conduct on the part of someone" who is not indicted. Yet in his report on Meese, whom he had decided not to prosecute, McKay said that the then-Attorney General had probably violated federal tax laws relating to the sale of securities. McKay also found that Meese probably had violated federal conflict-of-interest laws by participating in Justice Department matters that directly affected companies in which he held stock.

This represented the first time ever that an independent counsel had used the statutorily required report to suggest guilt on the part of the individual investigated. (In an ordinary criminal investigation, it is not language by a prosecutor in some report but grand- and petit-jury actions that alter the presumption of innocence to which a citizen is entitled.) The impact was duly noted by the *National Law Journal*: "Although as a practical matter the criminal findings have no effect, they were a public-relations disaster for Mr. Meese. News stories . . . highlighted the criminal allegations, while the explanation of the charges was too complicated to get much play in the press." For all intents and purposes, Meese, who was neither indicted nor convicted of any crime, was nevertheless perceived by many as a criminal.

So much for what experience shows about independent counsels. In retrospect, it is clear that much of what has happened to the office could have been predicted, though perhaps not by those like Senator Sam Ervin who in the heady post-Watergate days were decrying White House "monarchy."

There were two major issues that concerned the anti-executive Congress of that time. One was who should appoint a special prosecutor; the other was how to restrict the President's power to remove—and thus control—a special prosecutor. Vesting in the judiciary the power to appoint, and limiting to "good cause" the President's power to remove, were viewed as the principal means to the end of prosecutorial independence. Both actions raised important questions of constitutional law, finally addressed in *Morrison* v. *Olson*. But from the perspective of 1989 it is evident that these were merely the two most obvious features of a statutory framework that was bound to produce unreasonably independent counsels the *least* of whose costs are the ones accounted for in dollars and in sense. All that has occurred the statute permits, and even positively encourages.

Under the statute, each counsel, who is answerable to no one in the executive branch, has only one subject matter to investigate, but unlimited resources to do the job. And each counsel gets to start from scratch, ordering supplies and hiring aides for an office that did not exist before his appointment. A counsel does not have to consider the merits of other cases; he does not have to worry about normal budgetary constraints in deciding how far to press the case he is handling; and he has around him no peers handling similar cases or supervisors advising him in his labor. Under the statute, a counsel need not follow Justice Department policies or take account of the administrative, national-security, diplomatic, or other considerations that often shape a federal criminal investigation.

In other words, the statute itself insulates independent counsels from the kind of environment that tends properly to constrain all other prosecutors. Nor is this all that the statute does. Even as it insulates the prosecutor from his normal world, it effectively places him in an altogether different and far more political world.

In an ordinary case, the government would not announce even that an investigation is occurring; that fact is acknowledged only on the day an indictment is returned. But the statute authorizes the judiciary to announce an investigation once it has appointed a counsel. Not surprisingly, such investigations attract intense media interest, and expectations arise that a counsel will indeed prosecute unless it becomes palpably evident that he has no chance of winning a conviction. Furthermore, since the statute requires the independent counsel to report on his investigation, expectations arise that even if he declines to prosecute he will take his pound of flesh in the report.

Consider in this respect a statement by McKay's office defending its report on Edwin Meese: "Could you imagine if we came down where we came down and decided not to report that? Can you imagine the uproar?" Yet normal prosecutors keep their mouths shut all the time, and uproars do not roar up. But such are the pressures of the political world in which independent counsels operate, and such is the nature of human nature.

A Congress worried about unreasonable actions by independent counsels might attempt to rewrite the statute in ways designed to prohibit them. But it does not appear possible for Congress actually to make the present law into a good one by reform. For in the final analysis the problem here is at the level not of detail but of concept, and that problem can be resolved only by integrating independent counsels into the traditional prosecutorial universe with its far more fully developed sense of fairness, perspective, and judgment.

Could this be done? Congress might, for example, consider legislation providing for a permanent Office of Special Counsel. Such an office would be assigned the duty of investigating and,

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if necessary, prosecuting high-ranking government officials. Its head would be appointed by the President, subject to Senate confirmation, and he would be subject to removal at the President's discretion. This would introduce the element of accountability now lacking and have a beneficial influence upon the mindset of the counsel, who could not then consider himself superior to the President or empowered either to craft his own prosecution policies or to disregard other executive-branch concerns. Nor would the President's unfettered ability to fire an independent counsel necessarily threaten the integrity of his work. The political costs of doing so, without justifiable cause, would remain the ultimate insurance policy.

Organizationally such an office could be located within the Justice Department but physically housed elsewhere, as a symbol—the only one needed—of its independence. The office would have a small staff and, as a unit of the Department, would be expected to follow agency policies. Because its existence would be continuous, institutional memory would develop; there would be a larger "culture" to check the occupational hazards of the single-minded prosecutor. The office would handle allegations from the moment they were made, and the roles played under the present statute by the Attorney General (in screening the allegations) and the special court (in appointing an independent counsel) would be eliminated. The Office of Special Counsel would make the decision whether or not to prosecute, and the first public notice of any action taken would be on the day an indictment was returned—as in any other government prosecution. Any report on an investigation would be patterned after the one in Watergate—no McKay-style reports, in other words.

The idea of such an office, which would be independent in all the senses that truly matter, is not new—it was first proposed in the mid-70's, and legislation much to this effect actually passed the Senate in 1976 by a vote of 91 to 5. More recently, Andrew Frey and Kenneth Geller, former career officials in the Justice Department, advocated a similar idea on the op-ed page of the Washington *Post*. There can be little doubt that a statute creating such an office would be far preferable to the ad-hoc system of independent counsels that now exists.

The question remains, however, whether Congress can—or wants to—lift itself high enough to glimpse the public interest. For here we come to the darker side of the independent-counsel statute, a side that many in Congress may privately delight in.

No discussion of the statute can overlook the fact that it applies only to high-ranking members of the executive branch. Here, as in so many other areas, Congress has exempted itself from law it imposes on others. Although President Bush has asked Congress to bring itself under the law, it is hard to imagine a Congressman so foolish as to welcome a single-minded prosecutor chasing after him. And it is not just the individual who has to fear the tunnel-visioned probe of the independent counsel. Like everyone else, Congress has seen the dissipation of energy and the ebbing of morale in the executive branch that has resulted from investigations of Reagan-administration officials. It is thus in the interest of Congress as an institution that any possible investigations into itself be conducted the old-fashioned way—by the Justice Department. By the same token, it is in the interest of Congress—and especially a Democratic Congress—that investigations into the Republican-controlled executive branch continue to be conducted the new-fashioned way.

Congress, after all, is not some disinterested observer of the statute. To the contrary, it designed the law precisely to suggest that criminal investigation and prosecution of the executive branch are some independent good that must be pursued regardless of the consequences. It has, in effect, ordered that prosecution policy be freed from all normal constraints and all burden of accountability. In the Olson case, it went so far as to arrogate to itself (in the persons of Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee) a role in compelling an investigation into actions taken by an executive officer in the line of duty and not involving any element of personal gain. As the Olson investigation showed, the independent-counsel statute has achieved the status, to rework Justice Jackson's famous phrase, of a loaded gun, lying around on Capitol Hill where a sufficient number of Congressmen may grasp it and take aim at the executive branch. For those who use the statute in this way, it probably matters less that a given investigation result in conviction than that another name be added to the "sleaze" list, thus injuring an administration at the bar of public opinion, ensuring that administration officials themselves become more and more risk-averse, and dissuading strong-minded individuals from accepting invitations to work in positions subject to the strictures of the statute.

These are the political dynamics which indicate that Congress will not be eager do away with, or even substantially change, a statute that only the most naive can still say is about such high-minded notions as ensuring that no man is above the law. They are the same dynamics which indicate that when the opportunity arises, as it probably will in 1992, it would be wiser for a President to veto the statute than to extend it in its present form.

For in the end, the independent-counsel statute creates and breeds political irresponsibility. It absolves the President himself of responsibility for law enforcement, as neither he nor his aides any longer make the most important decision—whether to prosecute. Worse, the statute creates incen-

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tives for the President to be irresponsible. Instead of taking it upon himself to inquire into alleged misconduct of aides and deal with it accordingly—which might include standing behind an aide, not just prosecuting or removing him—the President can slough off his obligation onto the all-too-willing shoulders of an independent counsel.

Congress, meanwhile, and in exactly the same way, can slough off *its* responsibility to investigate malfeasance. The work of an independent counsel is the work of impeachment by other means; as Justice Antonin Scalia observed in his dissenting opinion in *Morrison*, the statute is "acrid with the smell of threatened impeachment." But Congress is not accountable for this quasi-impeachment effort, however it turns out.

The statute thus invites the President and Congress to join in a handshake of irresponsibility, leaving the issue of executive malfeasance to those who may pursue allegations as they see fit and who are politically accountable to no one.

In a world without the statute, Congress could still investigate behavior that was not criminal, and could even impeach and convict an executive officer for conduct that was not prosecutable; likewise, the President could inquire into ethically dubious behavior (as well as allegedly criminal conduct), and could reprimand or remove officials who had engaged in it. What the statute has done is to encourage the framing of allegations of malfeasance in exclusively criminal terms. It invites both the President and the Congress to defer assessments of behavior in broader ethical terms, if not to forgo such assessments altogether. And so far as a defendant is concerned, it encourages him, in the event an independent counsel does not prosecute, to claim complete vindication, and indeed ethical probity.

There is another distortion the statute works—on our politics in general. It is no suprise that it tends to breed unbalanced prosecutors, for it is itself the product of an unbalanced idea—that criminal investigation or prosecution should have a place in our government removed as far as possible from all other interests and concerns. It is a natural consequence of this idea that prosecution of executive officials should acquire a larger and more prominent role than it otherwise would have. One reason ordinary politics is on the decline in Washington these days is precisely the fact that independent counsels have been on the rise during the past decade. Their existence—or, more accurately, the possibility of their existence—encourages a politically timid executive branch even as it invites the media and Congress to chase after any allegation, no matter how insubstantial.

It is Washington heresy to suggest that our politics could survive without the independent-counsel law. But we should ask just how well our politics can survive with it. The time has come to rethink this particular Watergate reform.

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Israel: Some Surprising Polls

Mitchell Bard

For well over a year, Americans have been reading every morning about the mounting casualty toll in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, while seeing on the evening televison news pictures of Israeli soldiers chasing, beating, and shooting Palestinians, especially young men and children. All this is widely believed to have caused a serious erosion in American support for Israel, both among Jews and among Americans in general. In particular, the *intifada* is thought to have persuaded majorities in the United States and Israel alike to demand the hitherto unthinkable: that Israel should negotiate with the PLO.

Most of these beliefs are false. Although in some influential circles in the U.S. Israel has indubitably suffered a serious loss in stature, American public opinion on the whole shows no erosion of support for Israel. People are of course concerned about the violence in the Middle East, but the fundamental sympathy Americans feel toward Israel remains unshaken. Furthermore, while there is a growing desire to see the PLO included in the peace process, this attitude is conditioned on Yasir Arafat's promises to eschew terrorism and to accept the existence of Israel, and it is contradicted by a general belief that those promises are insincere.

The best indication of the attitude of the American people toward Israel lies in the response they give to the most consistently asked question about the Middle East: "In the Middle East situation, are your sympathies more with Israel or with the Arab nations?" In the most recent test, an ABC News/ Washington *Post* poll conducted this past April, support for Israel was found to have reached an *all-time high* of 69 percent, bouncing back and beyond pre-*intifada* levels and even exceeding by a full thirteen points the level of support in 1967, when it seemed as if all Americans admired the Israeli David for having defeated the Arab Goliath in the Six-Day War.

In the same April poll, to be sure, support for the Arabs was also relatively high. Yet it still stood at only 16 percent. Even when the question was reworded so that Israel was compared not with the Arabs in general but specifically with the Palestinians, support for Israel still came out nearly three times higher, and at over 60 percent.*

No doubt the April figures will decline in future polls, but the basic trend is unlikely to shift. After all, no single event occurred before April that would account for the jump in sympathy. To the contrary, events seemed to be running in the opposite direction. For one thing, neither the *intifada* itself, nor the intensity of media coverage of it, had subsided. For another, Yasir Arafat had only recently made his famous statement "renouncing" terrorism and "recognizing" Israel, thus throwing the onus of responsibility for the conflict on the Jewish state. Yet, despite all this, American sympathy for Israel not only held steady but increased. Indeed, the increase came from those respondents who had previously reported themselves as undecided, suggesting that in addition to its solid base of supporters Israel was gaining new friends.

What is true of Americans in general is truer still of American Jews. According to the most recent annual survey by the American Jewish Committee (AJC), nearly three-fourths feel that Israel "is a very important part of my being a Jew," and over 60 percent say they feel close to Israel. Nor have recent events dislodged such feelings: in the last three or four years, the numbers of American Jews feeling closer than ever to Israel exceed those feeling more distant than before. Eighty-four percent also say that they are *not* uncomfortable identifying themselves as supporters of Israel.

Jews do have their disagreements with Israel, but 82 percent of those surveyed by the AJC reported that such disagreements have not changed their feelings of closeness. This is particularly remarkable given the divisiveness of the recent controversy over "who is a Jew" and the proposed change of wording in Israel's Law of Return, about which 76 percent said they were somewhat or very upset.

The finding of the AJC survey that received the most publicity concerned an apparent erosion in pro-Israel sentiment among younger Jews: fewer under thirty-five said they felt "very close" to Israel than did their elders, and a similar pattern emerged on several other questions. In attempting to account for this discrepancy, Professor Steven M. Cohen, who conducted the survey, pointed to such bedrock determinants of attachment to Israel as the Holocaust, the founding of the state, and the wars of 1967 and 1973: "The younger the Jew," explained Cohen, "the less likely is he or she to have been

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* A Roper poll commissioned by the American Jewish Committee, also in April, showed a much lower level of sympathy for Israel (36 percent), but an even lower level of sympathy for the Arab nations (13 percent) than the ABC News/ Washington *Post* poll. Both of these figures were virtually the same as those of a Roper poll taken a year earlier. As between Israel and the Palestinians, Roper again found a much lower level of support for Israel (34 percent) than did ABC News/ Washington *Post*, but that figure was still two-and-a-half times higher than the sympathy Roper found for the Palestinians (14 percent).

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impressed by developments like these, which tended to build or augment pro-Israel sentiments." But another factor may also account for this phenomenon—namely, the "life-cycle effect." That is, younger Jews are simply at a stage of their lives where they are altogether more self-absorbed and less interested in public events or in Judaism. It is quite possible that those who feel less close to Israel today may grow more attached with age.

On the issue of Israel's handling of the *intifada*, American Jews do not express the outrage they are widely alleged to feel. It is true that, when asked by the AJC, in one sharply worded question, about television pictures of Israeli soldiers beating Palestinian rioters and protesters, more than half responded that Israel was acting wrongly, but the answers to other questions put this figure in context. Thus 65 percent declared that "aside from a few regrettable incidents," Israel has used a reasonable and appropriate level of force in countering recent Arab violence on the West Bank and Gaza. And 79 percent blamed the press for biased treatment of the conflict.

Throughout the *intifada*, attention has been focused on the issue of Israel's "soul," the idea being that Israel must end the occupation to preserve its democratic and Jewish character. Yet most Jews do not seem worried on this score. Only 26 percent in this year's survey said Israel's democratic and humanitarian character would be undermined by the occupation, and only 16 percent expressed concern for the Jewish character of the state.

WHAT about attitudes toward the PLO? The April ABC/Washington *Post* poll reported 71 percent of Americans supporting direct negotiations between Israel and the PLO.* Yet the same survey showed 81 percent with an overall *unfavorable* view of the PLO. An earlier Lou Harris poll (December 1988) found the overall approval ratio of the PLO to be 14 percent, which represented a doubling over the past, but should be viewed against the figure of 67 percent who regarded the PLO as "not friendly" to or as "an enemy" of the United States. (In the same poll, a majority agreed with then-Secretary of State Shultz's decision to bar Yasir Arafat from the country.) Finally, according to a January CBS/New York *Times* poll, a majority of Americans approved of meetings between the United States and the PLO, but a slightly smaller majority also said they did not believe Arafat and the PLO wanted peace enough to make real concessions. The same month, in a Media General/Associated Press poll, 74 percent of Americans thought the PLO had renounced terrorism only for political advantage, and a mere 6 percent believed it was sincere.

American Jewish opinion toward the PLO demonstrates the same skepticism. A little over a third of the respondents in the American Jewish Committee survey agreed that it was good for the U.S. to have opened a dialogue with the PLO, but by an overwhelming margin of 69 to 14 percent, Jews opposed Israeli talks with the PLO without further preconditions. An even larger majority, 86 percent, said the PLO was a terrorist organization; 62 percent thought it was determined to destroy Israel, while only 21 percent believed it would be willing to settle for a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

IN Israel itself, a poll by the Dahaf Institute last December found that 54 percent of Israelis favored negotiations with the PLO. This result seemed so startlingly high that it has been cited by virtually every commentator on the Middle East as indicating a decisive change that supposedly pits Israeli public opinion against the Shamir government; such, at any rate, is the interpretation offered by Arafat and other PLO officials and sympathizers who regularly invoke this figure.

However, the Dahaf finding has been misrepresented by the failure of those who cite it to mention a condition that was attached to the question about negotiations—namely, that the PLO keep its promise to stop terrorism in the territories. In addition, in February, a Jerusalem *Post* poll found that 89 percent of Israelis did not believe Arafat was interested in peace and only 30 percent were willing to negotiate with the PLO. According to a March poll published in *Haaretz*, 56 percent of Israelis *opposed* talks with the PLO. In April only 18 percent of Israelis surveyed by the New York *Times* said they were willing to negotiate with Arafat based on his recent declarations.

Almost every survey has also contradicted the notion that Israelis see Shamir as an obstacle to peace. And contrary to the impression of a growing dovishness among them, Israelis consistently say they are prepared to make greater sacrifices for their security and favor harsher measures to quell the uprising.

Of course, just because Israelis think one way about their government does not mean that Americans cannot or should not think another way. But the truth is that on most of the issues facing Israel the two peoples agree. Which is no doubt why Americans continue to support strong ties and high levels of assistance to the Jewish state. When asked, for example, about the ties between the United States and Israel, 89 percent in the ABC/Washington *Post* poll favored either strengthening them or keeping them the same; this was the identical figure as in January 1987, before the beginning of the *intifada*. In addition, 66 percent said the level of U.S. assistance to Israel should remain where it was, and a majority favored the current level even when the wording of the question was changed so as to inform the respondent that Israel gets more American aid than any other country.

IN SUM, the evidence does not support the notion that American popular support for Israel is eroding. On the contrary, as the *intifada* wears on and its emotional impact lessens, public opinion has, if anything, shifted in Israel's favor. That

* On this point, the April 1989 Roper poll found only 32 percent of Americans supporting such negotiations, while 42 percent thought that Israel was right to refuse to negotiate with the PLO.

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being so, whence the conviction of erosion and decline?

One factor has to do with temporary fluctuations that have taken place in the overall picture. Thus, in February of this year, an earlier ABC/Washington *Post* survey found that a majority of Americans did not think Israel was a reliable ally. This was the first time more than half of those polled doubted Israel's dependability. Similarly, a majority in the February poll rated Israel unfavorably. But these results, as we have seen, were atypical, and were indeed reversed within two months.

Another, more salient factor has to do with the *response* to such temporary dips on the part of those, either sympathetic to the PLO or on other grounds hostile to Israel, who seize on the slightest indication of wavering support for Israel as evidence of a deep structural change. To these people, the saturation coverage of the *intifada* by the media—a coverage itself patently sympathetic to the Palestinian rioters—*must* have produced the effect they desire. When, as in the February poll, this seems to be confirmed, they applaud loudly. On the other hand, when, as in the April poll, it is disconfirmed, they are silent or they resort to misrepresentation and distortion. A similarly selective use is made of survey results from within Israel, as the Dahaf Institute example suggests.

Poll sponsors are themselves not above engaging in this sort of behavior. In fact, in recent months, perhaps on the inspiration of the February ABC/Washington *Post* poll, several surveys were conducted with the all-but-explicit purpose of further documenting its findings of relatively low support for Israel. It is safe to assume that ABC and the Washington *Post* themselves would not have taken their April poll if they thought it would show sympathy for Israel at a record *high*. And even when the facts were in, the *Post* did its best to play them down by focusing in its news story on the majorities calling for direct negotiation between Israel and the PLO. The headline of the story was: "Americans Polled Urge Israeli-PLO Talks." Not until the tenth paragraph did the *Post* acknowledge that "sympathy for Israel is higher now than it has been at any time since the *Post* and ABC began measuring it in 1982."

THE fundamental reasons underlying American popular support for Israel have often been remarked upon and need no elaboration: a common political system; common social, cultural, and religious values; and common strategic and economic interests. It is also the case that Americans remain fundamentally *un*sympathetic to Arabs, and although this has softened somewhat as Palestinians have come to be seen as victims, the basic perception has simultaneously been reinforced by ongoing horrors like the terrorist explosion of a Pan Am passenger jet last December.

Then, too, in the present case the incessant and blatantly one-sided coverage of the *intifada* in the American media may have backfired somewhat, or at the very least made Americans impatient with the refusal of Palestinian leaders so far to strive for a genuine political accommodation with Israel and thus alleviate their people's pain. By contrast, Yitzhak Shamir's proposal on his March visit to Washington that free elections be held in the territories seemed to represent a spirit of compromise in keeping with American values.

None of this necessarily means that Israel can afford to maintain the status quo indefinitely without risking the loss of American support. Nor, for that matter, does the presence of such support necessarily guarantee that U.S. policy in the Middle East, which responds to other factors besides popular sentiment, may not shift toward greater sympathy for the idea of a PLO state. But it does mean that the much-heralded erosion of public sympathy for Israel, like the much-heralded split within the American Jewish community over Israel's policy, is still a figment, or, perhaps better, an invention of those who for one reason or another want Israel to withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza in favor of a PLO state.

Mr. Yankee Goes Home

Arturo J. Cruz, Jr.

IN MY hometown of Granada in Nicaragua, the great radio show of the 60's belonged to Julio Vivas Benard; his program began at 7 A.M. What spark in the man! But Don Julio's real trick was his mastery of the English language. His morning commentary turned on what was said in *Time* magazine, which he would leaf through brazenly in the middle of his show, mumbling, "Let's see what Mr. Yankee is up to."

"Mr. Yankee" was the American ambassador, whose residence was established on a hill, high above the rest of Managua. For years, the American envoy had been more than a mere ambassador. In the endless days of the American occupation in the 1920's and 30's, the country would hardly breathe without consulting the American ambassador. As a prominent citizen of Granada used to exclaim: "Praise be to God in heaven, and to the Yankee who represents Him on earth."

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In Nicaragua, almost supernatural powers were attributed to the Americans. Before the Marines first landed in 1912, Nicaraguans had had seventeen wars in seventeen years, climaxing in a great civil conflict. Under the dictator José Santos Zelaya, Nicaragua was a country bursting with frustrated ambitions, seething with warlords for whom the rule of law and party loyalty meant nothing. What was done one day was undone the next. All that mattered was the triumph of the *caudillo,* a personal triumph. The watchword was: "Power is like a woman who should never be shared."

Into this lawless demimonde, on a par with the ancient worlds of Florentine and Byzantine politics, the American Marines came to solve things. They expelled the seditious *caudillos* from the country, and sent the mysteries of Nicaraguan politics to the devil.

The Nicaraguan relationship with the Yankees was complex, in those twenty years of occupation. The Nicaraguans loved the Americans, and they hated them. To Nicaraguans everything foreign was better (except what was Honduran). They were convinced that nothing could work in Nicaragua. Exhausted by the public depravity and anarchy that had accompanied independence, their faith went out to a miracle, the *deus ex machina* who descended from on high, from the North, to rescue them from their own turpitude.

What counted most now was peace. Peace meant individual tranquillity, and personal welfare. And with the American occupation Nicaragua found calm: the wars ended—for a while.

But Nicaraguans also resented the Yankee: there were cantina brawls, affairs of passion, and baseball games. At the end of the day, the Nicaraguans got their revenge in bed—by seducing an American's unfaithful wife. In the popular imagination, the first Somoza was the great avenger. In Granada they still talk about how this man, Anastasio Somoza García, from the back country, with an obscure name, found the keys to the heart and bedroom of Mrs. Hannah, the wife of the American minister. On the same chain glittered the key to power: the guns of the National Guard, organized by the Americans to supervise elections and to replace the withdrawing Marines.

After the Marines went home in 1933, the country yielded to the power of the Somoza family for forty-three years. But the American ambassador was still Mr. Yankee, the neighbor who spoke for a sparkling and efficient empire. He was the agent between Managua and the remote corridors of the Department of State. For the Nicaraguans, the United States spoke with only one voice, the voice of Mr. Yankee, "my friend," as the Somozas used to call the ambassador.

In 1927, the American presidential emissary, Henry Stimson, had told General José Maria Moncada: "General, the United States does not make mistakes." All Nicaraguans—those of us who would become Sandinistas, and those of us who would become *contras,* and even those, like myself, who would first become one and then the other—grew up believing in Mr. Stimson's empire. Nobody could conceive of Nicaragua without the United States. Not even the most fever-brained Sandinistas then could imagine themselves in power. The unerring American empire would never allow it. If the Somozas left, the Marines would return, to manage the next crisis of succession.

But then one day the Somozas were history; the Marines never showed up; and the Sandinistas tumbled into power. They themselves could hardly believe it. What of intervention? Where were the Marines? Something had to happen. The vanquished, too, said to themselves, "This cannot be the empire's fault." It must have been Jimmy Carter, or Robert Pastor of the National Security Council, or Ambassador Larry Pezzullo.

We Nicaraguans could not come to grips with the fact that the old empire was no more. There was no single voice from the North. The Imperial Republic had fragmented in the clamor of over half a century. Thousands of new voices spoke for America. There was no Mr. Yankee.

But then, just as suddenly, Mr. Yankee reappeared in the person of Ronald Reagan. Surely he would now put everyone in his place as a good Granadine would wish. What mattered was to have faith. As long as Reagan was in the White House everything else was irrelevant: Congress, the Boland amendments, the Washington *Post,* Witness for Peace, the Europeans, and the Latin Americans—all counted for nothing: "St. Ronald will perform the miracle."

And so the *campesinos* went off to the mountains to struggle and die by the thousands as *contras,* without the slightest guarantee that their supplies would arrive, but with their absolute and ultimately sad faith that as long as the American *caudillo* was overhead, reigning still on earth as in heaven, everything would work out in the end. Mr. Yankee had always delivered. He would do so again.

But in truth the empire was no longer itself. Everything had changed, and not even Ronald Reagan—let alone George Bush—could put things back together again. The clever Sandinistas were the first to find out: the empire no longer wanted to be an empire. Mr. Stimson was dead.

We Nicaraguans now can only face one another and blame or help ourselves. If Julio Vivas Benard had his radio show today and asked, "Let's see what Mr. Yankee is up to?"—he would find that Mr. Yankee no longer knows.

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Professor of Terror

Edward Alexander

SINCE the *intifada* began in December 1987, scores of Palestinian Arabs have been murdered by other Arabs as "collaborators" with Israel. In the spring of this year, the rate of attacks began to increase sharply. Even by the standards that obtain in the Arab world, the murders have been unusually brutal: the lucky victims were shot; the unlucky ones were raped, tortured, and then hacked or bludgeoned to death. On June 8, for example, the Israeli press reported that "the naked, bloodstained body of Samir Abu Ras, 30, was found chained and hanging from an electricity pole outside the casbah. Palestinians said Abu Ras, who was known as a 'collaborator,' had been killed with hatchet blows."

The alleged offenses of the victims include working or shopping in Israel, selling land to Jews, giving information to Israeli security forces, and expressing interest in the latest Israeli proposal for elections in the administered territories. Yet despite the fact that early in 1989 Yasir Arafat threatened the life of Bethlehem mayor Elias Freij for proposing a truce that would make elections possible—"Whoever thinks of stopping the *intifada* before it achieves its goals," declared Arafat, "I will give him ten bullets in the chest"—Israeli and foreign journalists continue to ask whether the killing of "collaborators" in the administered territories and the threat of killing in the Galilee are carried out on the initiative of local freelance operators or on orders from the PLO abroad.

The answer to this question may be found in a most unlikely place: the spring issue of *Critical Inquiry*, an American academic journal of literary theory put out by the University of Chicago Press. Amid the moldy futilities that typically fill the pages of this quarterly we find a simmering incendiary charge by Professor Edward Said, full of that lurid illumination which always seems to attend any expression of the intellectual's desire to rule the world.

Said, who holds an endowed chair in English and comparative literature at Columbia University, and is also a member of the Palestinian "parliament in exile," has written extensively about a novelist whose great insight into modern political life, as it happens, has precisely to do with the special attraction of intellectuals to terror. Joseph Conrad, in *The Secret Agent* (1906), describes the "pedantic fanaticism" of a professor whose thoughts "caressed the images of ruin and destruction"; and he analyzes the longing of another (untenured) intellectual to create "a band of men absolute in their resolve to discard all scruples in the choice of means," chief among them "death enlisted for good and all in the service of humanity."

But Said, whose double career as literary scholar and ideologue of terrorism is a potent argument against those who believe in the corrective power of humanistic values, has swallowed Conrad without digesting him; for knowledge is one thing, virtue another. In *Critical Inquiry* Said offers a so-called "Response" to an article appearing in the same issue by Robert J. Griffin, a member of the English Department at Tel-Aviv University. Griffin, a fairly recent Ph.D. from Yale, whose own essay is a carefully reasoned rejoinder to a still earlier screed by Said on the subject of Zionism as racism, is treated by his respondent in language like this:

> Who is this Robert J. Griffin who has never in his life written a published word on Palestine, and is only . . . the author of two (or is it three? [in fact, it is neither]) . . . articles on Dr. Johnson? . . . Who is this creature. . . ? . . . He should atone for the crimes he defends and keep decently silent until (if he is a human being) he either joins the real opposition to real occupation or, if he is (as I suspect) a political invention, dissolves himself. . . .

This (and much more) from the Parr Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia, where Lionel Trilling once taught and exemplified the meaning of sweetness and light in culture.

Evidently thinking of his own prose as a verbal equivalent of the weapons wielded by his colleagues on the Palestinian National Council (PNC), Said spills ink to justify their spilling of blood:

> When Farouk Kaddoumi or Abu Iyad say that collaborators would be shot or that "our people in the interior recognize their responsibilities"—passages quoted by Griffin—surely even he must be aware that the UN Charter and every other known document or protocol entitles a people under foreign occupation not only to resist but also by extension to deal severely with collaborators. Why is it somehow OK for white people . . . to punish collaborators during periods of military occupation, and not OK for Palestinians to do the same?

Anyone familiar with Said's longstanding habit of confidently reciting the most preposterous falsehoods will not be surprised to learn that the UN Charter includes not one word about resistance to foreign occupation or killing "collaborators." I have searched without success for the unnamed "document or protocol" that would have "entitled" diehard followers of, for example, Tojo and Hitler to execute Japanese and Germans who cooperated with the American occupation forces in the aftermath of World War II. One can perhaps understand Said's craving as an intellectual (in Conrad's sense) for the ultimate "right," the right to murder—legally, no less. But if he and his colleagues in Arafat's inner circle claim this right in their deal-

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ings with Palestinian Arabs, what may we imagine them to have in mind for the Jews?

For it must be remembered, again, that Edward Said is not merely a professor and an ideologue but a member of the Palestine National Council, the leading spokesman for the PLO in the American news media, and one of Arafat's closest advisers. Who can forget last November's television images of this intellectual-in-ordinary to the king of terror, whispering (who knows what?) into his master's ear at the conclusion of the PNC meeting in Algiers?

A WRITER who has alleged that Jews are not truly a people because their identity in the Diaspora has been entirely a function of external persecution, or that the Holocaust served to "protect" Palestinian Jews "with the world's compassion," or that before 1948 "the historical duration of a Jewish state [in Palestine] was a sixty-year period two millennia ago," cannot easily outdo himself in misrepresentation. And it is true that much of Said's essay in *Critical Inquiry* follows the well-trodden paths of professional Israel-bashers, who can validate Palestinian Arab nationality only by reinventing Palestinian Arabs as the shadow-selves of Jews. Thus, Said alleges that Zionists "were in touch with the Nazis in the hope of emulating their Reich in Palestine"; that Israeli "soldiers and politicians . . . are now engaged in visiting upon non-Jews many of the same evil practices anti-Semites waged against Holocaust victims"; and that Ansar III (a detention center in the Negev for security prisoners) is "a concentration camp."

But the Israeli-Nazi (and Arab-Jew) analogy, now a mere ripple on the dead sea of anti-Semitic commonplace, also proves insufficently blatant for Said. "Israel's occupation," he announces, "increased in severity and outright cruelty, more than rivaling all other military occupations in modern history." Something new at last! Israel is even *worse* than the Nazi occupiers of Europe—and, one presumes, the Soviet occupiers of Afghanistan, the Syrian and PLO occupiers of Lebanon, the Jordanian occupiers of the West Bank who, subsequent to their occupation, destroyed about 10,000 Palestinian Arabs while suppressing the "Black September" uprising of 1970-71.

Said's essay not only answers the question of whether the PLO and PNC have renounced terror in dealing with their internal opponents; it also sheds light on a secondary mystery, about Said himself. Some of his critics have wondered how he could reconcile his relentless denunciations of the "racist" stereotyping of Arabs by Western "Orientalists" with his own equally relentless and no less racist insistence that, as he put it in 1980, "there are no divisions in the Palestinian population of four million. We all support the PLO." Moreover, a pedestrian mind might well ask, if every single Palestinian Arab belongs to a monolithic body with one will, acting and thinking in perfect unison, who are these "collaborators" with whom Said and his friends intend to "deal severely"? The answer perhaps is to be found in a sentence in his new essay which says that "every Palestinian, without significant exception, is up in arms against the laws of the Jewish . . . state." So the dead and the terrorized are, after all, *in*significant exceptions.

WHAT impression, one wonders finally, will Said's advocacy of the short and ready way of dealing with "collaborators" make upon the readers of *Critical Inquiry*? Many are literary theorists who have laid aside not only their old copies of I.A. Richards's *How to Read a Page* but also their old understanding of literature as an art meant to encourage moral awareness and humane understanding. Immersed in what the novelist Malcolm Bradbury calls the latest designer philosophies, they are hard put even to see the tautologies and absurdities in such notions as "postmodernism" and "intertextuality." Can such people be expected to recognize that the organization represented by this bloody-minded intellectual spokesman is an unlikely partner for negotiating a two-state solution in western Palestine? One wonders, but, alas, not for long.

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The Pollard Case

TERRITORY OF LIES: THE EXCLUSIVE STORY OF JONATHAN JAY POLLARD, THE AMERICAN WHO SPIED ON HIS COUNTRY FOR ISRAEL—AND HOW HE WAS BETRAYED. By WOLF BLITZER. *Harper & Row. 368 pp. $22.50.*

Reviewed by ELIOT A. COHEN

ON NOVEMBER 21, 1985, the United States government arrested Jonathan Jay Pollard, a junior civilian employee of the Navy, on charges of spying for Israel. The news shocked and astonished Americans and particularly Jews who had assumed that Israel would not compromise its relations with the United States by engaging in such acts. Their shock turned to horror when they realized that Israel had here contravened a long-standing and rarely breached practice of shunning the use of a target country's Jewish community for spying. On March 4, 1987, Judge Aubrey Robinson sentenced Pollard to life imprisonment, and his wife, Anne Henderson Pollard, to five years in jail. It seemed peculiarly harsh treatment: Pollard had cooperated with the government, after some initial evasiveness, and his wife had been only marginally involved in his activities.

Wolf Blitzer's *Territory of Lies* is a tightly written, riveting, and deeply troubling account of the Pollard affair—altogether a superb piece of journalism. Blitzer, the Washington correspondent of the Jerusalem *Post*, conducted one of the first interviews with Pollard in prison, in November 1986. Unwittingly, Blitzer thereby paved the way for Pollard's life sentence, for in granting the interview Pollard violated a pre-trial agreement that he had signed with the American government. Prompted, perhaps, by a sense of responsibility for this outcome, as well as by a natural curiosity, Blitzer decided to tell the Pollards' story. His account, based largely but by no means exclusively on long interviews with Pollard, as well as with other principals in the case, goes a long way toward explaining what happened.

THE bare bones of the case are these. In the spring of 1984 Pollard, then a twenty-nine-year-old intelligence analyst working for the Navy, approached a famous Israeli Air-Force colonel on leave in the United States, Aviem Sella, and offered to spy for Israel. Pollard was thus a "walk-in"—an unsolicited, as opposed to a recruited, spy. He was "run" as such by several officials of LAKAM (*Lishka l'Kishrei Mada*), the Scientific Liaison Office of the Israeli Ministry of Defense. The mastermind behind the operation was Rafi Eitan, a former deputy chief of operations of the Mossad, Israel's civilian espionage agency. There, Eitan had a reputation as a brilliant operative, but a man with no political sense. Not surprisingly, therefore, he had been eased out of the Mossad, winding up eventually as the head of LAKAM. One of Eitan's reasons for running the Pollard case may well have been a desire to show up those who had denied him positions (as head of the Mossad or the SHABAK, Israel's counterintelligence service) that he thought he deserved.

Pollard spent the next year and a half spying for Israel. During that time he routinely delivered piles of classified material to a Washington apartment where a secretary from the Israel embassy in Washington used elaborate photocopying equipment to reproduce it. The quantity of documents he handed over was staggering: it was later estimated that they would have filled a room six feet by ten feet by six feet. In return, he received (tax free, obviously) several thousand dollars a month, plus free trips to Europe and Israel during which he and his wife received regal treatment.

There can be no doubt that Pollard provided the Israelis with intelligence otherwise unobtainable by the Israeli government. According to Blitzer, he gave them, *inter alia*, technical data on Soviet weapon systems in the hands of the Arabs; satellite photography of Israel and Arab states; material on Syrian air defenses and on chemical-weapons production in Arab countries; and information on American intelligence-gathering, including a communications-intelligence handbook. Both Blitzer and Pollard himself claim that this material paved the way for the Israeli air raid on Palestine Liberation Organization headquarters in Tunis, allowing Israeli aircraft to avoid detection and strike their target with precision.

It is quite clear from Blitzer's account that although the operation was officially "off-line," the upper echelons of the Israeli government were probably well aware of it. The precise tasking of Pollard—he was given detailed shopping lists of documents to acquire—and the lavish reception he got in Israel all suggest that this was hardly a rogue operation, at least in the usual sense.

There may have been some unease in Israel about employing a spy in the United States, and particularly an American Jew, but the gains seemed worth it. Besides, Eitan and others were convinced that the United States had done the same to Israel. Blitzer quotes Senator David Durenberger of Minnesota as saying that the CIA accepted an Israeli military "walk-in" during the war in Lebanon in 1982.

YET despite its payoff, the Pollard operation was, from the Israeli point of view, and as many Israeli national-security experts have argued, an act of appalling stupidity. As we shall see, even a slight acquaintance with Pollard should

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have revealed that sooner or later the operation was bound to be compromised—he was too unstable a person not to make a slip, or even to speak openly about his activities.

But even had Pollard been a model of discretion, such an operation was highly risky. The short-term payoffs could not begin to approach the long-term costs to Israeli foreign policy if (or rather when) Pollard should be caught. And indeed, those costs have now come in the form of the anger and suspicion with which Israel is regarded by the U.S. defense and intelligence establishments, and the resentment of the American Jewish community at this twin betrayal. Blitzer also suggests (though here perhaps he exaggerates) that American Jews working for the government in sensitive national-security positions now live under a cloud of mistrust which has blighted more than one career.

The Pollard operation was undertaken at a time when Israel had become more dependent on the United States than ever for military aid, and when military cooperation between the two countries had reached a peak. It was, after all, in the mid-1980's that the U.S. Sixth Fleet increasingly began to pay visits to Israeli ports, and agreements for strategic cooperation began to bear fruit. Israel had particular reason to get along with the United States following the war in Lebanon and the tense confrontation with U.S. Marines in occupied Beirut—another set of incidents that has left its scars on U.S.-Israel defense relations. From the point of view of realpolitik alone, then, Pollard's controllers behaved with a reckless disregard for long-term considerations.

Furthermore, although allies do gather intelligence on one another, the Pollard affair represented a departure from norms of behavior between friendly nations. It is one thing to eavesdrop on an ally's radio transmissions or take pictures of his airfields from a satellite, or even to listen to an indiscreet or disgruntled soldier or bureaucrat. It is quite another to suborn an official employee of a friendly country, to exploit his disloyalty indefinitely, to corrupt him with illegal payments, to ask him to commit massive and repeated violations of his nation's security. When that ally is not merely a friend but a generous and powerful benefactor, the wrong is all the worse. There are only two things to be said in the Israelis' favor: they did not recruit Pollard, and they will probably refrain from such behavior in the future.

The short-sightedness of Eitan and his subordinates became clear when the affair broke. No plans had been made to allow Pollard to escape the United States, and when, in desperation, he managed to enter the Israel embassy, he was evicted by panicky officials.

Pollard, legitimately believing that he had been abandoned, began to cooperate with American investigators, and soon the Israelis were asked to do the same. Blitzer notes that they had two choices: to stonewall and refuse all cooperation, or to assist the American efforts fully. They did neither. Israel made available photocopies of a mere handful of low-level documents stolen by Pollard. It denied American investigators access to many of the principals and, in two crowning pieces of folly, gave Eitan a cushy job as director of one of Israel's largest government-owned firms and promoted Colonel Sella, assigning him to one of the Israel Air Force's most prestigious commands. Under American pressure the latter action was reversed, but once again, only after the Israelis had managed to get themselves the worst of both worlds.

ALAS, there is more than enough stupidity in the Pollard affair to go around. When one turns to the American side of the story one is appalled by the ineptitude of our procedures for screening those who have access to our country's secrets. Before going to work for the Navy, Pollard had been turned down for a job by the CIA, which apparently had some concern over a history of drug use in college, but the CIA never shared this information with the Defense Investigative Service. Later Pollard got into trouble for claiming to have contacts with South African military-intelligence officials. Blitzer quotes the *U.S. News & World Report* account of that investigation in 1981:

> Pollard told naval investigators "fantastic tales about having lived in South Africa and his father's being [CIA] station chief there." One senior Naval Intelligence official said: "It became obvious the guy had to be unstable. . . . He wasn't on anybody else's wavelength. And that's when the system got nervous about him."

Sufficiently nervous, in fact, to strip him of his clearances and recommend that he see a psychiatrist. But after seeing one—who told him that he was not mentally ill—Pollard threatened to sue the Navy, and Rear Admiral John Butts restored his access to classified information.

Despite this episode—or perhaps because of it and others, which had given him the reputation of being an unpleasant oddball—Pollard was transferred to the Anti-Terrorist Alert Center (ATAC) in June 1984. There he quickly became known for telling tall tales, failing to get his work done, checking out materials which had no bearing on his area of responsibility (the Caribbean), and taking classified information out of the office at unusual times (late Friday afternoon). When his boss became suspicious and brought Pollard to the attention of the head of naval counterintelligence, the latter is reported to have said, of the Israelis, "Are they really that stupid that they would hire Jay, of all people?" Unfortunately, one detects no trace of irony in this remark.

ONCE Pollard was arrested and began to confess, the government was aghast at what it learned. Yet the government agreed not to ask for the maximum sentence, on condition that Pollard would cooperate fully and abide by a number of rules, one of which he violated by granting interviews while in prison awaiting sentencing. Blitzer and Pollard speculate that this represented deliberate entrapment by the government. But it actually stemmed from two simple facts: first, the government has a great deal of control over the activities of

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convicted felons, but not of unsentenced (albeit jailed and confessed) suspects; secondly, as evidenced by events leading up to Pollard's arrest, the United States government is simply not as well-organized a monolith as conspiracy theorists would like to think.

The government did provide Judge Robinson with a 46-page memorandum, almost all of which is very highly classified, that describes the damage done to national security by Pollard. In a related document, its author, the then-Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, declared, "It is difficult for me, even in the so-called 'year of the spy' to conceive of a greater harm to national security than that caused by the defendant in view of the breadth, the critical importance to the U.S., and the high sensitivity of the information he sold to Israel."

Weinberger has become a *bête noire* to Pollard apologists: Pollard himself insists that Weinberger wanted, all along, to paint Israel as a threat to the United States no less great than the Soviet Union. It will be decades, if not longer, before we discover what was in that memorandum, but enough has been learned to make it clear that it is a cool account of the materials stolen by Pollard, not 46 pages of anti-Semitic ravings.

WHAT damages did Pollard do? To begin with, if Blitzer is correct, Pollard compromised a wide range of intelligence sources, both human and technical, and it would appear that the injury was real, not merely potential.

Nor, from the security point of view, did it matter that the spying was done by a friendly government. This is the point which is perhaps least understood among those who, without excusing Pollard, feel that he was treated too severely. For one thing, there is a real danger that a friend who has stolen material will unwittingly lose that material to a common adversary. Soviet spies have been active in Israel since before the state was founded. In 1961, for instance, former Lieutenant Colonel Israel Beer, who had served as a senior military aide to the Chief of Staff of the Israel Defense

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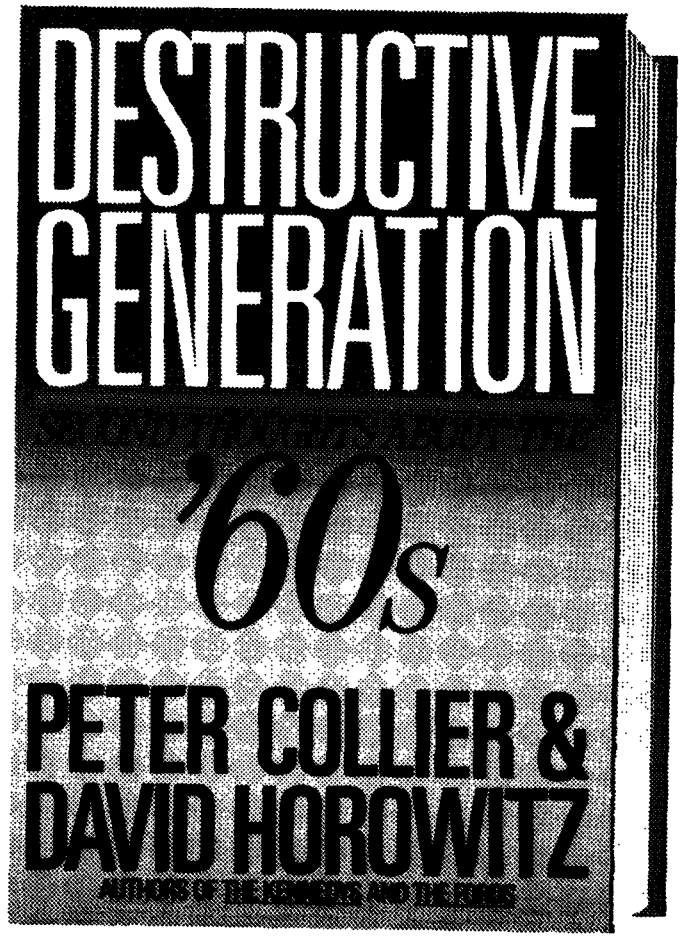
—George Gilder, *The Washington Post*

"Brilliantly, compellingly, Collier-Horowitz argue that the New Left made common cause, in the '70s and '80s, with the Old Left to form what they call the Next Left—a dishonest, unsavory, and dangerous amalgamation of the pop revolutionary attitudes of the '60s and the residual Stalinism of the '30s, '40s and '50s."
—Chilton Williamson, Jr., *The Los Angeles Times*



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Forces during Israel's War of Independence, and who had been handpicked by David Ben-Gurion to write the official history of that war, was exposed as a Soviet agent. He died five years later in an Israeli prison; other Israeli members of Soviet spy rings (Shabtai Kalmanovich and Marcus Klingberg) still languish in Israeli prisons today. Thus, U.S. material compromised to Israel is in danger of going, willy-nilly, to the Soviets as well.

Secondly, contrary to many misapprehensions, the United States by no means shares its most sensitive intelligence with its friends, including its most valued intelligence partner, Great Britain. Nor, for that matter, does Israel. It is true, as Blitzer points out, that Israel has provided the United States with a great deal of useful information about Soviet hardware and other subjects. In return, Israel has received not only intelligence but vast quantities of financial aid and large numbers of some of the most advanced weapons in the American arsenal. But the Israelis by no means share all *their* secrets with the United States. The Israelis are as fearful that the United States will compromise their security as the other way around. When the Israelis share data they often bargain hard for it, quite properly: the United States government would fail in its obligations if it did not do the same. Jonathan Pollard therefore arrogated to himself the responsibilities of the President and Cabinet-rank officials, who are responsible for determining how and under what circumstances information should be shared.

Thirdly, if the United States were in the habit of being lenient to "friendly" spies, it would open itself up even more than it already has to so-called "false-flag operations," that is, recruitment attempts by agents of one country posing as agents of another. This is a common ruse. Jerry Whitworth, the Soviet spy, claimed that he believed the information he was delivering was going to Israel.

Despite all this, the United States government did not press for a life sentence for Pollard. The government did ask for "a substantial period of incarceration and a monetary fine" to deter others and to minimize Pollard's continuing threat to national security. Pollard, unfortunately, has a near-photographic memory for the documents he has seen which will make him a danger to national security for some years to come. But the life sentence (no fine was imposed) was a decision reached by Judge Robinson and Judge Robinson alone. A surprisingly tough-minded appointee of President Carter, Robinson was outraged not merely by Pollard's deeds, but above all by his attitude. Pollard had willfully broken his pre-trial agreements by talking to the press. He had, in addition, shown not the slightest remorse for his actions, nor left any doubt in the mind of any observer (including Blitzer) that he regarded his obligations to Israel as above those to the United States.

Robinson's anger touched Pollard's wife, Anne Henderson Pollard, as well. He sentenced her to five years in prison for "conspiracy to receive embezzled government property," and for being "an accessory after the fact, to possession of national defense documents." Did she merit such treatment?

After her courtship with and marriage to Jonathan Pollard, Anne had begun a career in public relations, doing free-lance work for a firm that was trying to win a contract from the People's Republic of China. To bone up on Chinese affairs she asked Jonathan Pollard to bring back some articles on China from his office. He obliged with a number of long classified studies which Anne read, took notes on, and used for her work (although she did not pass them to the Chinese). These documents, and others, were later found in the Pollards' apartment.

In the course of Jonathan's career as a spy—which Anne knew about and approved—she benefited from the lucrative illegal salary which came his way (a good bit of which ended up in jewelry and clothes for her) and the deluxe trips overseas, during which she enjoyed the attentions granted a celebrity's wife. When Pollard was caught she assisted him in trying to conceal evidence of his espionage. And, in an act which, like so many others in this sordid tale, combined brazenness and witlessness, she appeared on the television show *60 Minutes* the Sunday before sentencing. The Assistant U.S. Attorney prosecuting her, David Geneson (a Jew, as it happened), read portions of the interview to the court. Had she known what she was getting into? "Very much so." Would she do it all over again? "I feel my husband and I did what we were expected to do, what our moral obligation was as Jews, what our moral obligation was as human beings, and I have no regrets about that." As her frustrated lawyer (who had not known of her intention to give the interview) watched, the prosecutor repeated the phrase, "No regrets." It is not surprising, therefore, that Judge Robinson was little inclined to have mercy on her, either.

WHAT then of Jonathan Pollard himself? Was he a misguided idealist, eccentric perhaps, but well-intentioned, driven to a thoughtless deed by his love of Israel and by a justifiable anger at American refusal to share information with Israel? Does his tale have tragic overtones, the story of two loyalties that came into conflict? Blitzer suggests that he thought as much when he first interviewed Pollard:

> To some extent, Pollard impressed me as a son of the American Jewish community run amok. I felt that American Jewry was partially responsible for having created him. . . . Pollard, that day at Petersburg, reminded me very much of other bright young Jews for whom religion wasn't necessarily Judaism, but Israel—an ideological passion for the country as a birthright for all Jews. Their image of Israel is often highly exaggerated, not very realistic. But for the grace of God, I said to myself, any one of them could have wound up like Pollard under similar circumstances. And that bothered me.

Blitzer does not return to this theme, and I suspect that, although he thinks Pollard deserved a lesser sentence, he found his own early view untenable.

Consider, for a start, the non-Israeli dimension of Pollard's espionage. Not only did he steal those

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classified documents bearing on China. He also provided, gratis, classified intelligence documents to two friends who were professional investment advisers, and with whom he was involved in a business venture, and he gave a third friend other documents to help further his career. Misplaced idealism, dual loyalties, or a grim sense of urgency about Israel's security problems had nothing to do with these criminal actions. Indeed, Pollard's claim that he wanted to give Israel intelligence material because he knew of terrorist threats concerning which the United States had not warned Israel was equally bogus. He worked at the Caribbean desk at ATAC, not the Middle East desk, and his Israeli handlers told him specifically not to waste his time with material on terrorism.

WHAT motivated Jonathan Pollard? To answer that question, one must ask who he is. By recording his conversation and interviewing his friends, Blitzer has done a brilliant job of helping us make a judgment on that score.

Pollard, the son of a distinguished scientist teaching at Notre Dame, grew up in a Jewish though not an overly religious household. His father had served in the Army during World War II and had some minor contacts with American intelligence thereafter: despite Pollard's fantasies, however, he was not a CIA agent or anything like it.

Pollard tells horrifying tales of anti-Semitism encountered in his youth, although he was soon sheltered from these by attending a private school. Whether, in fact, he encountered quite as much anti-Semitic bullying as he says is another matter. He spent the summer before his junior year in high school at a special camp in Israel, at the Weizmann Institute. He recalled it later as "one of the most liberating experiences I have ever had in my life. . . . I saw people who didn't have the Diasporic [*sic*] hangups." A Weizmann scientist, Dr. Harry J. Lipkin, had another recollection. Pollard

> left behind him a reputation of being an unstable troublemaker, the worst case of this kind in the history of the summer camp. In one fracas, he was injured in a brawl and had to be taken to a hospital. This is the only time such a case has occurred at the camp.

At Stanford, where he was an undergraduate, Pollard went around saying that he was a colonel in the Israel Army, and telling his friends that the Mossad had paid his tuition. He also, during this time, had at least one paranoid episode brought on by the heavy marijuana smoking that was later to get him turned down by the CIA, and which so alarmed his parents that his father flew out to Palo Alto to see him through it.

At the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts (where he studied for a time without completing his work for a degree) Pollard continued to swagger about his Israeli connections, maintaining that he had served in the Israel Army on the West Bank, and boasting of (imaginary) espionage-related jobs at various think tanks.

Israel, then, clearly meant something special to Pollard, but in an odd way. This strange relationship is reflected in his rhetoric, which is not merely intemperate but subtly weird. For example, he speaks frequently of his "racial obigation" to Israel. Yet American Jews almost never refer to themselves as a race, and indeed the very words "race" and "racial" carry overtones of prejudice and bigotry at best, and of hideous memories from the Holocaust at worst.

THE issue of dual loyalties, like the notion that Pollard is the hapless product of a confused American Jewish community, is quite false. American Jews routinely can and do make choices. Some honorably decide that they want to become Israeli citizens. They emigrate, serve in the army, and settle for

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good in their new land. Others attempt to help Israel by raising money, by lobbying, or through advocacy of Israeli causes—all entirely legal activities. American Jews in government, including those in sensitive national-security positions, may maintain a special affection for Israel but do not allow it to impinge on their responsibilities, compromise their integrity, or twist their word of honor. Conceivably, although no instance comes to mind, a Jewish official could find himself so torn that he could not balance his loyalties and affections, but in that case he could, again honorably, protest to his superiors or resign his position.

Jonathan Pollard took none of these courses. His Jewishness was not a faith that lent strength to his character and set bounds on his conduct but rather a springboard for his darkly exuberant imagination. A fantasist rather than an idealist, he recklessly broke his word of honor for profit and indeed for whim; he did grievous harm to America's security; he showed himself incapable of remorse, or even of understanding how despicable his conduct had been. Blitzer makes too much, I think, of the notion that Pollard was "corrupted" by the money the Israelis decided to pay him; the real corruption had deeper roots than money can reach. Whatever betrayal he suffered, it is insignificent compared to that which he committed.

The Extremist

LYNDON LAROUCHE AND THE NEW AMERICAN FASCISM. By DENNIS KING. *Doubleday. 415 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by HARVEY KLEHR

TWENTY years ago Lyndon LaRouche was teaching classes in dialectical materialism at the New York Free School, preparing members of the left-wing Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) to seize political power. Today he is notorious as a right-wing extremist and is serving a fifteen-year jail sentence for fraud and conspiracy. In the interim, he conducted a mind-boggling ride through the American political landscape. Dennis King, in the first full examination of LaRouche's extensive political empire, has unearthed fascinating details about the origins, structure, financial activities, and philosophy of that extraordinary organization.

Lyndon LaRouche's journey to the far Right was a circuitous one. Born in New Hampshire in 1922 into a conservative Quaker family, he came into contact with leftist radicals while serving in a conscientious-objector camp during World War II. In 1948 he joined the Trotskyist Socialist Workers party and remained in that tiny sect until 1966, learning such valuable political lessons as how to "isolate and publicly degrade dangerous individuals" in one's own organization, break them psychologically, and then use them.

Inspired by the New Left upsurge of the mid-1960's, LaRouche became a guru to radical students in New York, gaining influence among members of Columbia University's SDS chapter, particularly those involved with the Maoist Progressive Labor party. As SDS disintegrated late in the decade, LaRouche's National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC) grew. By 1973, when it had 600 members, LaRouche launched Operation Mop-Up, a campaign to establish his hegemony on the Left by physically attacking members of the Communist party and other left-wing groups.

The thuggery of the NCLC went hand-in-hand with psychological terror aimed at its own members. LaRouche initiated "ego-stripping" sessions to remove inner doubts harbored by members. These meetings, at which people were humiliated and degraded in front of their comrades, were also linked to what became known as the "Great Manchurian Candidate" scare. LaRouche was convinced of the existence of a CIA-KGB brainwashing operation designed to assassinate him, and frantic cadres were now compelled to worry about whether they had been covertly programmed to perform the task.

By the mid-1970's, the devoted hard-core members still remaining in the cult were ready to follow wherever LaRouche led. That proved to be away from Marxism and toward an alliance with the neofascist and anti-Semitic Right. Arguing that the main enemy of mankind was the Rockefeller family, LaRouche was soon also denouncing Zionists and meeting with Willis Carto of the anti-Semitic Liberty Lobby. Almost one-quarter of NCLC members were Jews, but they were presumably able to swallow his defense of Nazi war criminals, praise for all things German, and attacks on Judaism (as a fossilized religion glorifying usury), Jews (as carriers of a "cholera culture" and "intellectual pus"), and Israel (as a nation following policies "a hundred times worse than Hitler").

King argues that LaRouche "was a man with a coherent program, subtle tactics, and—what is usually lacking in American politics—a long-range plan of how to get from here to there. Both in word and deed, he was a serious ideologue in the classic European fascist mold." Yet LaRouche's ideological fantasies—based on the notion that he and his cadre were the core of a Neoplatonic humanism which over the centuries had been locked in battle with the forces of oligarchy once headquartered in Babylon—are far less significant than the issue of how such an extremist could go as far as he did.

And he did go far. Championing the development of fusion energy and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) long before they became matters of public debate, LaRouche was able to recruit scientists and government bureaucrats into such front groups as the Fusion Energy Foundation. While some supporters of SDI (like Generals Keegan and Graham) refused to have any dealings with him, others were not so fastidious. As King notes, LaRouche appealed to scientists and engineers by defending their interests, attacking environmentalists, providing useful technical information and gossip, and cultivating

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personal contacts. "LaRouche built up a pool of influential people, whom he had compromised, and who thus had a vested interest in downplaying his extremism to avoid embarrassment to themselves."

Similar techniques enabled LaRouche to build an extensive intelligence network. Organized along the lines of a news-gathering service, it was based on careful reading and clipping of the foreign-language press, cultivation of sources among academics, newsmen, and law-enforcement personnel, and incessant telephone calls sharing information. Unlike the members of many cults, LaRouche's recruits often came from elite universities and included individuals with analytical skills and writing talent. Thus, his "newsmen" were able to convince scores of foreign politicians and public figures to speak with them. They were aided by a more appreciative market abroad for some of LaRouche's conspiracy theories, as well as Third-World support for LaRouche's attacks on the International Monetary Fund and proposals to repudiate foreign debt. Top officials in the CIA, including Admiral Bobby Inman, also met with LaRouche and praised the political intelligence developed by his organization.

LaRouche's contacts with the CIA and law-enforcement agencies convinced some left-wing conspiracy buffs that he was a government agent. King, although critical of those government employees who did deal with LaRouche, dispels the notion that he was part of some sinister CIA plot. After all, LaRouche's operatives also had contacts with the KGB; Fusion Energy Foundation scientists prepared reports for the Soviets on the American scientific community; and *New Solidarity*, the LaRouche newspaper, defended Soviet spies.

KING shrewdly documents the way LaRouche used his members' own money both to support his organization and to bind them to it more closely. Initially, he argues, most of the NCLC's money came from the members themselves. After turning over their own funds they were encouraged to cadge money from their families, borrow to the limit on their credit cards, and take out bank loans and turn the proceeds over to the NCLC. There was never any intention of repaying these loans. Members were moved frequently from city to city, lived communally, and had no assets to seize if they were ever located.

The process compromised the membership morally. Having cheated their own families and welshed on personal debts, they had few qualms about fleecing senior citizens or gulling professionals into loaning money in the belief they were aiding the Reagan revolution or helping to develop fusion energy. The NCLC stiffed vendors, engaged in massive credit-card fraud, and operated high-pressure boiler-rooms. But its greatest resource was its cadres. Using their considerable skills, LaRouche built successful businesses providing computer services and software for large companies.

Such organizational skills also enabled the NCLC to master the intricacies of election law and recruit hundreds of candidates for public office, many of whom won substantial shares of the Democratic vote in primary elections. Few of these political neophytes were NCLC members. Yet in 1986, two who were in fact members startled the country when they won Democratic nominations for Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State in Illinois, prompting gubernatorial candidate Adlai Stevenson to withdraw from the Democratic-party ticket.

How was LaRouche able to get away with it?

King frequently criticizes the media for not denouncing LaRouche more often, more loudly, and more accurately. By focusing on some of LaRouche's weirder activities and statements—for instance, he branded Queen Elizabeth as a drug pusher—the media, King com-

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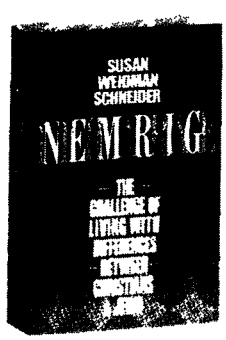

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plains, helped transform LaRouche from a dangerous fanatic into an amusing eccentric. King castigates newspapers for their reluctance to call LaRouche a fascist, and he condemns the timidity of journalists worried about the libel suits LaRouche filed whenever he was displeased by a story.

Many of these complaints are on the mark. LaRouche's aggressive litigiousness no doubt did act as a deterrent. Although his group never won a libel suit, he made it expensive to attack him. The Anti-Defamation League, his principal organizational antagonist, was sued four times. But the monetary was not the only cost of fighting LaRouche. The LaRouche organization was so vicious and reckless that those who incurred its wrath—Henry Kissinger, for example—faced not only personal harassment but widespread dissemination of the most vile smears and innuendos about their personal lives. Still, King's charge that even in the late 1980's LaRouche "continued to enjoy a remarkable degree of immunity from public criticism" is refuted by the many examples of such criticism in his own book.

King comes closer to the source of the problem when he observes that "American journalists are generally unaccustomed to dealing with the subtleties of extremist ideology." This point should have been developed. Journalists understand extremists with guns or hoods; they will cover the Ku Klux Klan or a violent left-wing group that brandishes weapons and issues bloodcurdling threats. Their eyes glaze over, however, when confronted by ideological extremists like the Communist party or the NCLC who use more peaceful techniques to gain influence.

King also blames Jewish groups for not combating LaRouche more vigorously, charging that "none of the major Jewish organizations spoke out" during and after the LaRouche assault on Kissinger. In fact, however, as already noted, the Anti-Defamation League has long been one of LaRouche's foremost opponents. King also taxes Jewish groups for failing to denounce their co-religionist Melvin Klenetsky, LaRouche's candidate for mayor of New York in 1981. But these organizations face severe strictures on their ability to intervene in political campaigns; they risk the loss of their tax-exempt status.

More outrageous is King's unsupported slur that "in effect, many [Jewish groups] had acquiesced in the new dogma of neoconservatives; it's okay to ally oneself with fascists against the main enemy, the Left." King of all people should know better. Some figures in the intelligence community and the scientific world did cooperate with LaRouche out of ignorance, naiveté, stupidity, or some shared values. That is to their discredit. The vast majority of conservatives, however, would have nothing to do with him, and a number of neoconservatives participated actively in the effort to expose him.

In King's estimate, LaRouche surpassed the "achievements of any other extremist movement in recent American history." In one limited sense King is correct—no other extremist group has been able so rapidly to raise such vast amounts of money (perhaps $200 million over the last decade) or build so extensive a political network. Yet LaRouche has established no permanent footholds in American institutions. None of his candidates has been elected to any significant position. Respectable politicians regard him as anathema.

By contrast, working more quietly and less flamboyantly, the American Communist party has created front groups that include the names of members of Congress, labor leaders, and prominent black politicians. Gus Hall recently boasted that, running under other party labels, Communists have been winning election to political office. The CPUSA, however, gets far less searching attention from the media than Lyndon LaRouche.

The enemies of democracy are not liberals or conservatives. They are extremists, whether of the Right or the Left. Despite its flaws, King's detailed study is a powerful reminder of the importance of identifying those enemies and isolating them from decent company.

New Rome

BYZANTIUM: THE EARLY CENTURIES. By JOHN JULIUS NORWICH. *Knopf. 408 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by JAROSLAV PELIKAN

IN ONE of those eminently quotable and hopelessly prejudiced assessments of which he was such a master, Edward Gibbon in Chapter 53 of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* described "the reproach and shame" of the Byzantine empire, "a degenerate people":

> They held in their lifeless hands the riches of their fathers, without inheriting the spirit which had created and improved that sacred patrimony; they read, they praised, they compiled, but their languid souls seemed alike incapable of thought and action. In the revolution of ten centuries, not a single discovery was made to exalt the dignity or promote the happiness of mankind. Not a single idea has been added to the speculative systems of antiquity, and a succession of patient disciples became in their turn the dogmatic teachers of the next servile generation.

That caricature has dominated historiography, especially in the English-speaking world, as for example in the judgment of W.E.H. Lecky with which Lord Norwich begins his introduction to this book: "Of that Byzantine empire the universal verdict of history is that it constitutes, without a single exception, the most thoroughly base and despicable form that civilization has yet assumed . . . a monotonous story of the intrigues of priests, eunuchs, and women, of poisonings, of conspiracies, of uniform ingratitude, of perpetual fratricides."

During the 20th century, thanks to the work of scholars across the map from Kiev to Dumbarton Oaks, the caricature has been giving way to a much more balanced picture: a good index of the change

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is to compare the first edition of Volume 4 of *The Cambridge Medieval History* (1936), "The Eastern Roman Empire," with the second edition (1966), which had to appear as a double volume. It is the results of the more recent study by such scholars as these that John Julius Norwich, a professional officer of the British Foreign Service whose earlier books include *A History of Venice*, seeks to present here in the first of a projected three-volume series on Byzantium. As he explains somewhat diffidently (and perhaps a bit disingenuously), "This book makes no claim to academic scholarship." What it does claim is to set forth a connected narrative of the transition from the Roman empire when its seat was in Rome to the Roman empire whose seat was in Constantinople, "New Rome"; and he concludes his narrative, appropriately enough, with the emergence of an even newer Roman empire, when Charlemagne was crowned emperor in Old Rome on Christmas Day in 800 C.E.

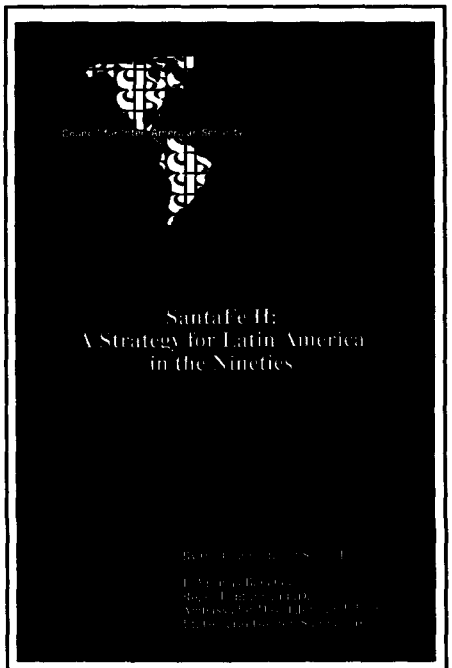
Of the eighteen chapters in the book, the four dealing with what he calls the "extraordinary career" of the Emperor Justinian I are in many ways the most effective. As described by Norwich, Justinian emerges as a noble and gifted, but flawed and ultimately tragic figure. His dream of reuniting East and West in a revived Roman empire was not only a failure in its outcome, but probably an illusion in its very conception. His empress, Theodora, was the subject of character assassination by the Byzantine historian Procopius (whom Norwich rightly calls a "sanctimonious old hypocrite"), which was pruriently repeated by Gibbon, but in fact she and Justinian were "the sole and supreme rulers of the Byzantine empire"—and, Norwich comments, "the plural is important."

Because of the author's interest in art and architecture, the role of Justinian as the great builder of Constantinople engages his attention at some length. It is, understandably, the building of Hagia Sophia that receives the most space. On the other hand, Justinian's project of "a complete recodification of the Roman law," which was to influence the subsequent history of civil and canon law for many centuries, is accorded only a scant paragraph.

None of this is very novel and there is indeed very little in the book as a whole that is. The chapters of *The Cambridge Medieval History* mentioned earlier contain vastly greater amounts of information, and the older history of A.A. Vasiliev (1928 and 1952) is more balanced. The bibliography contains relatively few recent works, even in English, and in a field where European scholars have made such major contributions it is shocking to find not a single title in German, not even to mention works in Russian or Serbian.

I AM not merely making a point of personal privilege as a historian of the development of Christian doctrine when I express my disappointment that neither in the chapters on Justinian nor in the earlier ones on Constantine—nor, to tell the truth, anywhere else—does Norwich enable his readers to understand the centrality of doctrinal issues in the entire life of Byzantium. He admires Byzantine religious art, and he obviously rejoices that the iconoclasts were defeated at the Second Council of Nicaea in 787; but he does not expound with any credibility the fascinating if convoluted argumentation of the defenders of the icons, whose fundamental thesis was that by the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity in the man Jesus Christ, God Himself had decisively reinterpreted the meaning of the second commandment, because now there was a living image of whom it was possible and legitimate to make an icon or image in turn.

Norwich examines the cultural, linguistic, geographical, and political factors in the eventual separation of East and West, symbolized by the coronation of Charlemagne; but when he comes to the religious and intellectual issues over which they disputed, the best he can do is to observe, rather wanly: "That a plebeian mob should be inflamed to fury not by political slogans but by such questions as the relation of



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the Father to the Son or the Procession of the Holy Ghost puts a greater strain on our understanding, but it is true nonetheless." Whether this puts such a strain on our understanding or not, it is, it seems to me, the task of the historian, and specifically of the historian of Byzantium, to make use of close textual analysis combined with imagination to suggest just why it might have been that "such questions" seemed so important.

The account in this volume unfortunately closes just before the decades in which Byzantium was to make its most important geopolitical mark on the history of Europe and of the world, with the conversion of the Slavs to Christianity by the "apostles" Saints Cyril and Methodius, who were sent to the Slavic lands by the Byzantine emperor Michael III in 862. The conversion of Rus' (which refers in the first instance to the Ukraine, not to Muscovite Russia) in 988 was part of the eventual outcome of the Cyrillo-Methodian mission, and the division of the Slavs between Old Rome and New Rome had consequences that can be seen in the dispatches emanating from Warsaw and Lvov even as we speak. Yet Lord Norwich's neglect of the doctrinal issues in Eastern Orthodoxy is matched by his inattention to the details of the Byzantine liturgy—which was, after all, the *raison d'être* for all those churches, and for the icons. As a result, the reader who turns to this book in an effort to understand what made Russia so different from the West long before Lenin will not find much help.

The Leap of Action

THE JEWISH WAY: LIVING THE HOLIDAYS. By IRVING GREENBERG. *Summit Books. 463 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by DAVID SINGER

CAN the Orthodox religious tradition speak to contemporary Jews? The answer, of course, is yes, provided they are willing to listen. Irving Greenberg's new book, focusing on "Judaism as it expresses itself in the Jewish holidays," is a strikingly original attempt to create just such a dialogue.

Generally speaking, English-language books on the Jewish holidays fall into one of three categories. First there are scholarly works, like Theodor Gaster's *Festivals of the Jewish Year,* which draw upon the findings of modern historical research and the comparative study of religions. These books have a limited appeal, and in any case are not written with the intent of providing religious inspiration and guidance. A second genre is exemplified in Arthur Waskow's *Seasons of Our Joy,* a book which tendentiously builds upon its discussion of the Jewish holidays to promote a pet cause—in this case, radical politics and the countercultural ethos. Here again—once the reader understands what is going on—the appeal is a limited one. Finally there are the substantial number of "how-to" volumes produced under various denominational auspices. These books reach larger audiences of already committed Jews, providing them with valuable guidance on the nuts and bolts of holiday observance. Two successful models of this type are Peter Knobel's *Gates of the Seasons* (Reform) and the relevant sections of Hayim H. Donin's *To Be a Jew* (Orthodox).

The Jewish Way serves up a heavy dollop of "how-to" guidance, but its overall aim is much more ambitious. Greenberg seeks to lay bare Judaism's "underlying structures of meaning—the understanding of the world, the direction of history, the values of life" that find their "classic expression" in the Jewish holidays. It is these "deep structures" that Greenberg wishes to convey to contemporary Jews, in order to help "release [their] creative imagination for religious living."

For Greenberg, *The Jewish Way* is a natural extension of work in which he has been engaged for years as the director of CLAL, the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership. Although his name is also prominently associated with efforts on behalf of Jewish religious unity, Greenberg's primary labor has been directed toward increasing the literacy and commitment of Jewish leadership cadres. The fact that he has a Ph.D. from Harvard gives him entry to the largely secularized Jewish audience that he wishes to address; the fact that his own Orthodoxy has been significantly shaped by exposure to modern thought makes him appreciative of the existential situation in which that audience finds itself. In short, Greenberg is very well placed to carry forward the hoped-for dialogue between Jewish tradition and the contemporary sensibility.

The Jewish Way is organized in four parts, each focusing on a particular cluster of holidays. First come Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot—the three "core holidays" that "combine to communicate powerfully the origins and vision of the Jewish religion." Most basic of all is Passover, which teaches the "central idea of redemption." The Exodus, Greenberg stresses, is an "orienting event," one that "sets in motion and guides the Jewish way (and, ultimately, humanity's way) toward the Promised Land—an earth set free and perfected." Following Passover is Shavuot, in which "the Jewish people reenact the heart-stopping, recklessly loving moment [at Mt. Sinai] when they committed themselves to an open-ended covenantal mission." Finally there is Sukkot, which "explores the psychology of wandering, the interplay of mobility and rootedness, and the challenge of walking the way."

A second cluster of holidays—the Sabbath and the Days of Awe (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur)—provide significant opportunities to "nurture personal life along the way." "These days were designed to orient the individual and the family toward redemption in their personal lives, even as the pilgrimage holidays set the direction for the Jewish people collectively." On the Sabbath, Greenberg observes, the "vivid glimpse of perfection combines with the delights and peace of the day to restore the soul." In sharp contrast, the Days of Awe

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"lead to fundamental self-renewal" by "shattering the crusts of arrogance and complacency. . . . Moved, the individual removes the detritus of evil deeds and guilt; afterward, a reborn person walks the Jewish way."

All the holidays mentioned thus far have their source in the Pentateuch; taken together they present a "stationary model of Judaism, coherent, revealed, structured." But Judaism, as Greenberg notes, is open to history, and history is "full of the unexpected." Hence the third cluster of holidays, consisting of Purim, Hanukkah, and Tisha B'Av. Purim is about the "challenge of Diaspora living," the fact that Jews have been confronted with "genocidal anti-Semitism." Hanukkah focuses on the issues of "assimilation, acculturation, and Jewish survival" in the context of the encounter with Hellenism. As for Tisha B'Av, it commemorates the destruction of the Second Temple, a "catastrophe . . . so overwhelming that it threatened the structures of meaning in Judaism."

Finally, there is a fourth cluster of holidays that Greenberg identifies with two events of "extraordinary magnitude" in contemporary Jewish experience: "the Holocaust, which is as great a crisis for Judaism as was the destruction of the Temple, and the recreation of the state of Israel, which can only be compared to the Exodus." Greenberg devotes a chapter each to Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Memorial Day) and Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel Independence Day), "two major new holy days [that] are being added to the Jewish calendar."

To make holiday observance palatable to his intended audience of largely secularized Jews, Greenberg employs a variety of strategies. Foremost among them is an emphasis on ritual activity as performance and play. To talk of these things is to hold forth the promise of pleasure, something quite different from the associations brought forth by the notion of "commandment," and also to provide an original rationale for detailed religious observance that might otherwise prove extremely onerous. In this connection Greenberg urges his readers to take on starring roles in their own Jewish drama: "If you will," he notes, "one must be a bit of a ham to be a kosher Jew."

Secondly, Greenberg relies extensively on psychological explanations to account for various ritual patterns. Here again, the aim is to plug into the reader's own interests. Some of Greenberg's observations in this vein are quite acute, as when he explains the ritual washing of the hands before the seder meal in the following manner: "In the psychic movement from storytelling to eating, the hands are washed to break the routine of the story and to awaken consciousness of the festive meal. This is also the transition from the dry crust of slavery to the rich, varied feast of free men and women. Thus, feasting and biological pleasure confirm the psychological liberation experience."

Psychology operates more directly in *The Jewish Way* in the soothing, supportive tone of Greenberg's voice, very much in the mode of the therapeutic professional. This comes through with particular force in the chapter on the Sabbath, where Greenberg is at pains to reassure the reader likely to be overwhelmed by the "oppressive minutiae" of observance. "If a particular requirement is a problem," he writes, "do not give up. Start slowly. Do it in stages. Grow into [it]."

Last but hardly least is the strategic use Greenberg makes of humor. While not all the jokes in *The Jewish Way* are successful, the volume contains more material of a humorous nature than all the other books I have ever read on the Jewish holidays combined. The aim, of course, is quite serious: to relieve the pressure on author and audience alike. "In laughing at religious forms and at reality," Greenberg writes, "one admits the fallibility of religious hopes but one also affirms them."

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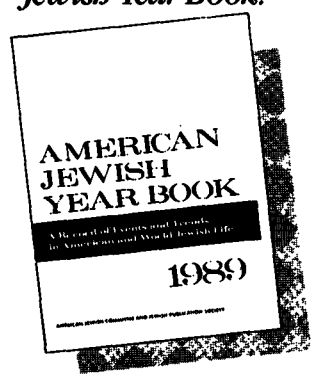

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The Jewish Way is an impressive book, perhaps the best single volume of its kind in English. Still, the question must be posed: has Greenberg successfully bridged the gap between the Orthodox religious tradition and the contemporary sensibility? The answer, I am afraid, is no. While he spares no effort to present Orthodox teaching in an attractive manner, Greenberg completely sidesteps the most crucial issue of all—the issue of faith.

Greenberg knows full well that he is addressing an audience short on religious belief. Rather than facing up to this, however, he chooses to ignore it, apparently out of fear that argument in this area will only alienate his readers. Instead, Greenberg relies on a variant of Abraham Joshua Heschel's "leap of action." The book's implicit message is: "Don't worry about faith. Just do, and faith will take care of itself."

But it will not. Without a firm foundation in belief, how is a contemporary Jew to take on the burden—yes, the burden—of disciplined religious observance? One may, to be sure, latch on to some particulars of practice, either because they are personally gratifying or because they bespeak a loyalty to the Jewish people. But consistent, comprehensive observance—never. In the absence of a framework of belief, what to Greenberg is ritual play to others can only seem grueling labor.

The situation is made more problematical still by Greenberg's insistence on the centrality of the Holocaust to contemporary religious consciousness. In and of itself this is a perfectly reasonable position, but it stands at cross purposes with any effort to enhance belief in Judaism as a religion of redemption. In Greenberg's own case, preoccupation with the Holocaust leads to talk about a "broken covenant," and even to this startling statement:

> The Holocaust reveals that behind the flux of history is an ideal paradigm that is fragmentary, broken. If the central normative models are "flawed" or "cracked," then the criteria of systemic adequacy used by most people—i.e., wholeness, completeness, or even being perfect—may be fundamentally erroneous.

If Greenberg is serious, then the message of Passover—the message of redemption—has been completely subverted. Can he reasonably expect contemporary Jews to walk "the Jewish way" if that way leads to nowhere?

Greenberg, of course, is not responsible for the fact that most contemporary Jews remain outside the circle of faith. And he certainly deserves praise for reaching out to these Jews in an honest, open manner. But unless and until the issue of faith is met and overcome, the Jewish way will remain, of necessity, an infrequently traveled road.

America in the World

BARBARIAN SENTIMENTS: HOW THE AMERICAN CENTURY ENDS. By WILLIAM PFAFF. *Hill and Wang. 198 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by
RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

BORN sixty years ago in Iowa, William Pfaff has traveled far from home. For the past twenty years he has lived in France, from where he has offered periodic *tours d'horizon* to readers of the *New Yorker*. It is in that magazine that much, perhaps most, of the material in *Barbarian Sentiments* originally appeared; what Pfaff has stitched together from these essays does not make for an altogether seamless garment, but the seams are also not too obtrusive. There is a sustained argument here, and one that tells us much about current intellectual dispositions toward America and its place in the world.

Writing in a leisurely, even languid, manner, Pfaff sets forth a Eurocentric, or, perhaps better, Europhiliac, case for American isolationism. He attempts to explain "how the American century ends"—and ends up suggesting

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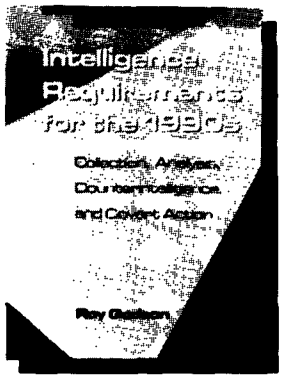
Rethinking American Intelligence



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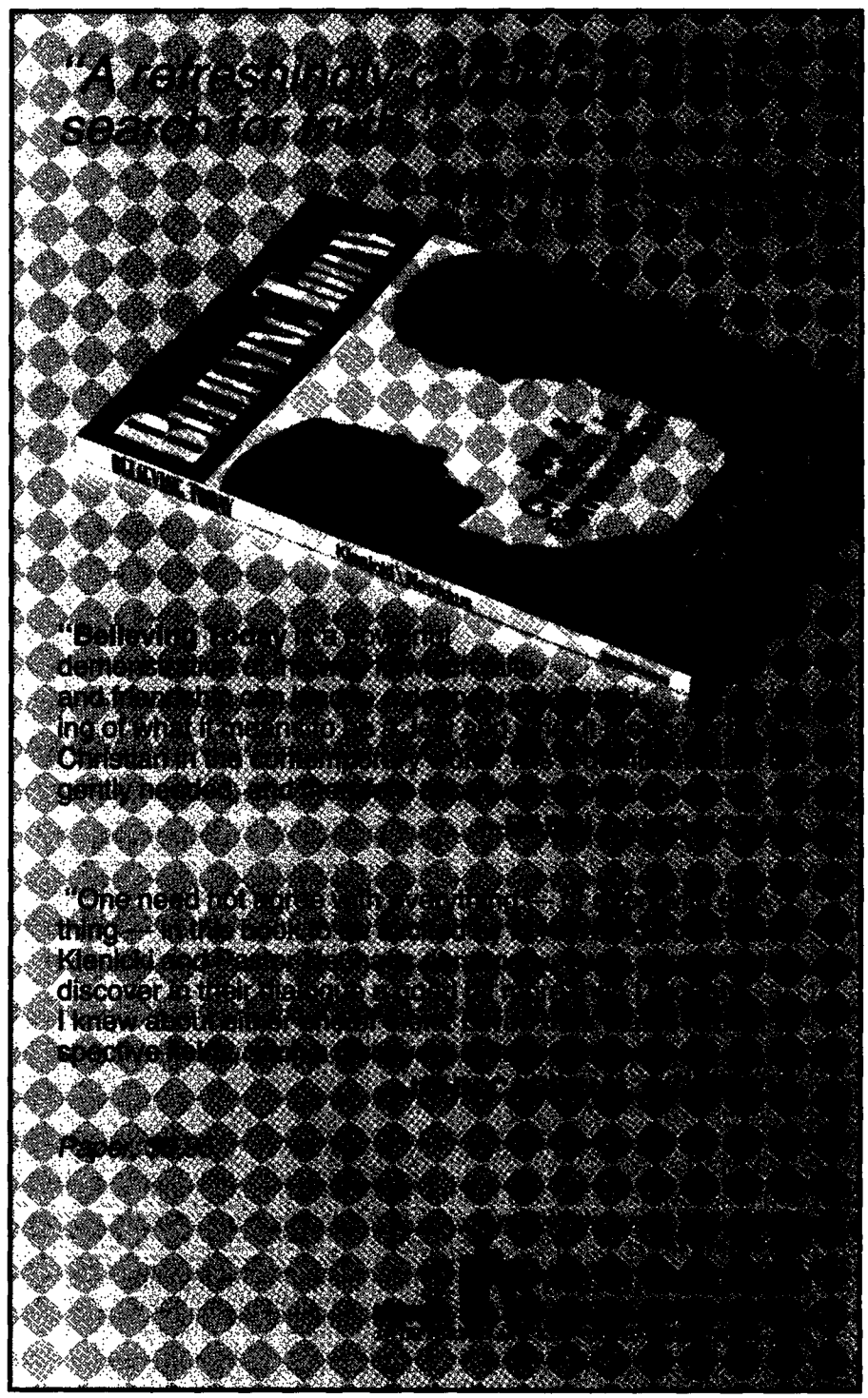
that the American experiment itself may be drawing to a close. Although it might thus seem that his book belongs to the decline-and-fall genre of literature, for Pfaff the American instance is less a matter of a fall from greatness than a morning-after hangover following a binge of imperialistic self-delusion. "The accounts that history presents have to be paid," go the portentous opening lines of this book. "The past cannot be put behind until it is settled with."

Like certain Americans in earlier generations, Pfaff has found in Europe the maturity, grandeur, and *gravitas* lacking in his native land. Europe for him is composed of "achieved nations" with real histories. The picture, he writes, has changed dramatically since 1945, when America had just saved Europe from itself and the older culture seemed thoroughly exhausted. Today, by contrast, "The evidence . . . is that Europe's dynamism, far from lost, is in fact intensifying." Pfaff's expectation is that the Single European Market foreseen for 1992 "will make of Western Europe the richest, most populous, and most productive industrial community on earth." Hard though it may be for Americans to accept, "Europe in the future may count for more than the United States."

It will certainly, in his view, count for more than the East. Among the myriad delusions afflicting the American mind, according to Pfaff, is the idea that the future lies in the Pacific. Here he provides some comparisons worth pondering. For all the excited talk about the economic miracle of the "four little dragons" (South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong), their combined gross industrial output is hardly larger than that of the Netherlands alone. Admittedly, there is Japan, but Pfaff believes that Japan is the exception and not the norm for Asian development.

Pfaff's comparative data are instructive and should be taken seriously by those who tend to assume that the shift of world power from the Atlantic to the Pacific has already occurred. Yet the data also prove less than he thinks. We need to attend not simply to gross industrial output but also to growth rates, and to potential for growth. In Asia, unlike the Netherlands, there are hundreds of millions of people who might in the foreseeable future be brought into the productive circle of modern economics, with tremendous results. By contrast, the major nations of Western Europe, with birth rates considerably below what is required for population replacement, may be at or close to the peak of their growth potential.

Pfaff declares that the economic capacities of Western Europe far outstrip "anything that can reasonably be expected of the Pacific Basin, at least in this century." Perhaps so, but this century has only eleven years to run, a very limited time frame for someone so intent on urging the larger historical per-



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spective. In short, one need not share Pfaff's view that Paris (to do a turn on Henry IV) is worth more than the masses of Asia in order to agree that Paris is, and will continue to be, worth a great deal.

TURNING to developments in the Soviet Union, Pfaff displays views that are commonsensical if not terribly original. Gorbachev, he believes, is "condemned" to repeat the futile efforts of Malenkov, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, and Andropov, each of whom tried to "square the circle of modern Russia" by combining initiative with central direction, revolutionary commitment with stability, and international advance with nuclear stalemate. Although he tends to underplay the differences between Gorbachev and his predecessors, Pfaff does seem correct in seeing Russia's Communist leaders as captive to an ideology they cannot reject "without eliminating the source of their own legitimacy as the governors of the country."

Pfaff contends that revolutionary forces at work in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe are quite beyond the control of Gorbachev or anyone else, and that Gorbachev may turn out to be "the Kerensky of this revolution." He may or may not be right about this. His dismissal of Soviet expansionism as a thing of the past, however, seems somewhat premature. "All that is over," he asserts with striking confidence; everywhere the Soviets are in retreat. His assurance on this point, one feels, may owe less to hardheaded analysis than to an understandable sympathy with the reformers in Moscow, locked as they are in a struggle with the "forces of Russian nationalism, reaction, and isolation." Clearly Pfaff believes that Soviet isolationism would be regressive and dangerous—unlike, presumably, the American variety, which he favors.

Actually, as between the Soviet Union and the United States, Pfaff strikes an attitude akin to that of "moral equivalence." In Angola, Cuba, Nicaragua, and elsewhere, he writes, both powers have contended through the use of proxy forces. "In this use of others, a kind of complicity grew up between the American and Soviet governments, and even between the two peoples, spared final responsibility for what their governments did, and evading a suffering that others experienced on their behalf." Pfaff is impatient with the (American) suggestion that there is a significant moral difference between the purposes of the two powers. Democracy vs. Communism, freedom vs. tyranny —such language he sniffingly dismisses as "ideological."

In Pfaff's view, both the Soviet Union and the U.S. are victims of deterministic doctrines, the one derived from Marxism, the other from a naive assumption concerning the inevitability of democratic advance. To their credit, however, the Soviets are abandoning their delusions, while America seems to be incorrigibly addicted to the idea that it has some kind of mission to preserve and extend freedom. This idea, Pfaff repeatedly asserts, is a myth that "none of us believes." Who exactly this "us" is remains unclear, although presumably Pfaff has a feel for the readership of the *New Yorker*.

Not only is the United States not a hope for freedom, but the young people of Europe—whose historical memory, as our advocate of the long perspective is forced to admit, does not extend even to America's role in World War II—increasingly see it as a force of oppression. Therefore, the best thing we can do for the world is to give up our pretensions and stop meddling. For the truth, according to Pfaff—and it is a truth that "implies a fatalism which it goes against the American grain to accept"—is that the great majority of people in the world do not care a fig about what Americans call freedom. One cannot but wonder what the students in Tiananmen Square, with their replica of the Statue of Liberty, would have made of this breathtaking dictum.

Where, finally, should one locate William Pfaff in the confusing mix of contemporary discourse? He himself opines that his views have lacked an ideological home since the demise of an American patrician tradition in the 19th century. Clearly Pfaff shares that tradition's preference for the more hierarchical order of the Old World. He bemoans the absence of a "political class," an elite of a kind which our culture does not and apparently cannot provide. He is disdainful of the putative delusions of modernity and its twin aberrations of American-style democracy and American-style capitalism. And he is particularly scornful of those neoconservative intellectuals who have given a measure of respectability to "simplistic" notions of democracy. In this connection he quotes, approvingly, from George Kennan: "I do not think that the United States civilization of these last 40-50 years is a successful civilization. . . . I think this country is destined to succumb to failures which cannot be other than tragic and enormous in their scope."

Given all this, one might classify Pfaff as a paleoconservative, a specimen of the isolationist Old Right, were he not, as we have seen, so clearly sympathetic with the standard causes of contemporary liberalism. It is perhaps more accurate to say that William Pfaff is a liberal isolationist.

Pfaff's title comes from an axiom of Wei Yuan, of the 19th-century imperial Manchu court: "In order to handle barbarian affairs, you have to know barbarian sentiments." Pfaff gives the distinct impression that, for him, the Americans are the barbarians. Whether he knows their sentiments, however, is a question very much in dispute. What is not in dispute is that, were they to share *his* sentiments, the world, including the world of his beloved Europe, would of a certainty be a much darker place.

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A view from Washington

NO MORE WISHFUL THINKING

By Harold B. Finger
President and Chief Executive Officer
U.S. Council for Energy Awareness

For too long, wishful thinking has dominated energy policy. The wishful thinkers tell us we don't need to build more power plants. They tell us we don't need to drill for oil and natural gas in frontier areas. They always have easy ways to avoid the problem.

They're dangerously wrong. We have an energy crisis coming. First, we're increasing our dependence on foreign oil and, in the process, gambling with our energy independence and our national security. Second, electricity demand is growing faster than new supplies are being added because of our continued economic growth. In some parts of the country, electric reliability is already threatened.

It's time to face up to our energy needs realistically. We cannot depend on "what if..." scenarios that won't deliver results for years, if at all.

Let's drop the wishful thinking and look at the facts instead.

In the last 15 years, since the 1973 oil embargo, the U.S. has made great strides in conserving energy and improving efficiency of energy use. Since 1973, our Gross National Product has grown 46 percent, but our *total* energy consumption has risen only 8 percent. That's great progress.

But those numbers don't tell the whole story. During that same period, demand for electricity has grown about 50 percent—roughly parallel with GNP growth. Clearly, electricity has fueled much of the growth in the U.S. economy over the past 15 years. And we must have additional, reliable, affordable supplies of electricity if our economy is to continue to grow.

For many reasons, most of them beyond the electric industry's control, plans for adding new generating capacity are not keeping up with increasing demand. Construction of new power plants is at a 15-year low. New capacity planned over the next 10 years will support growth in electric sales of only one percent per year. That's one-fourth the rate of growth we've experienced over the last six years.

The Oil Problem

Building new power plants is only part of the solution. We must also ask ourselves: what kind of power plants? The U.S. is already dangerously dependent on foreign oil and that dependence is rising. Imports represent nearly 50 percent of U.S. oil consumption. Last year, payments for foreign oil accounted for about one-third of our trade deficit and that bill is increasing.

What does this have to do with electricity? Today, over 25 percent of U.S. electric capacity is still fueled by oil and natural gas. Because oil-fired electricity is costly, electric utilities try to reserve that capacity for times of very high demand. If we don't meet rising electric demand with domestic fuels—like nuclear energy and coal—utilities will be forced to use those oil-fired plants more of the time, worsening our foreign oil dependence and boosting our electricity costs.

Unfortunately, we're already moving in that direction. Back in 1973, electric utilities used about 1.5 million barrels of oil per day. By 1987, thanks largely to new coal and nuclear electric power plants, utilities had cut that to about 500,000 barrels per day. But in 1988, utility oil use increased—to 675,000 barrels per day, a 24 percent increase. And by the mid-1990s, utilities will be burning about 1.8 million barrels per day—almost all of it imported. That's worse than 1973. Our nation is so dependent on foreign oil for other uses, like transportation, that we simply cannot afford to make the situation worse by using foreign oil to generate electricity.

The Nuclear Energy Solution

We can head off looming problems, and nuclear energy should be an important part of our energy strategy.

Nuclear energy has not always been a financial blessing for electric utilities, because of punitive treatment by state regulators who have refused to let companies recover the cost of building the plants. But nuclear energy has been an unmixed blessing for the U.S. and its people.

Nuclear energy is our second largest source of electricity, after coal. U.S. nuclear plants have cut consumer electricity costs by over $50 billion since the 1973 oil embargo. The spent fuel from all our commercial nuclear plants has been managed scrupulously at carefully controlled sites. And our plants have operated safely. We learned much from the Three Mile Island accident. The jolt it gave the industry's confidence led to substantial improvements in operation and design. The trends in plant performance tracked by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations prove this. They show steady improvement in all areas of nuclear plant performance.

Finally, our nuclear plants have reduced oil imports. Since 1973, nuclear energy has displaced nearly 4 billion barrels of oil and cut our foreign oil payments by over $114 billion.

With such a record, there's no question that nuclear energy should play a larger role in supplying our future electricity needs.

These are facts. Wishful thinking cannot deliver so well.

Harold B. Finger

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